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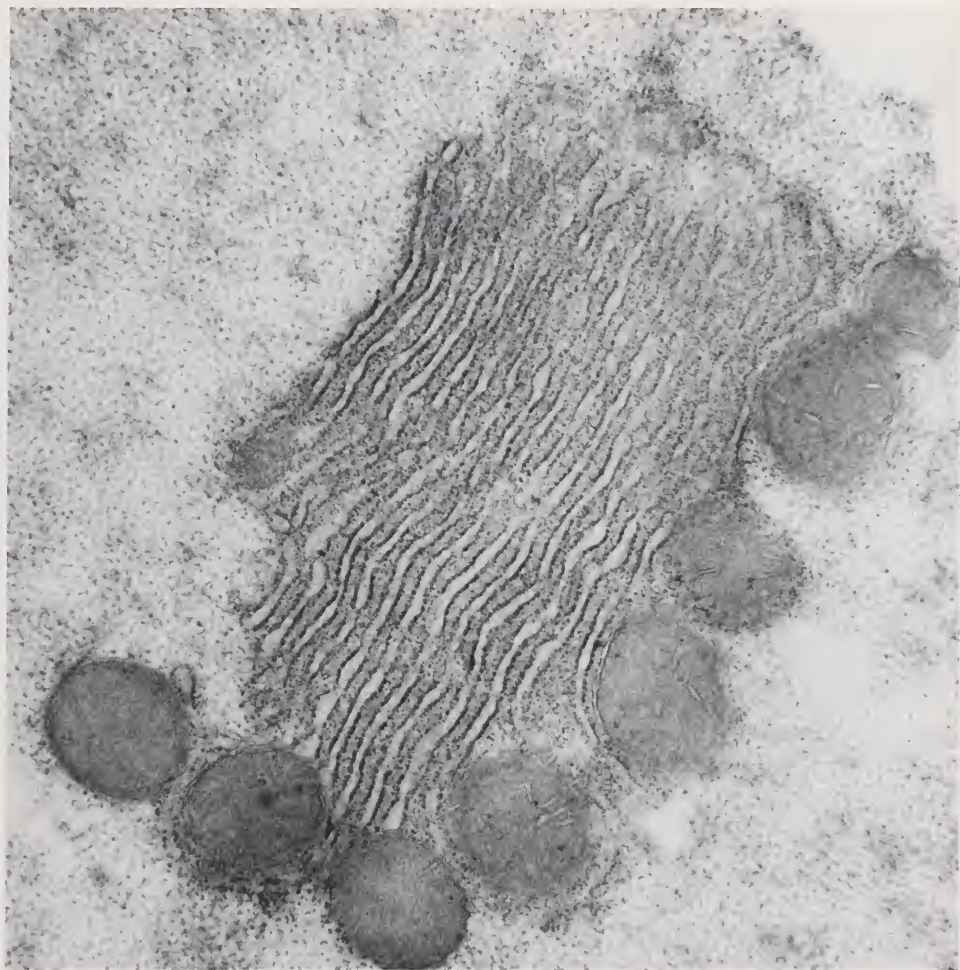
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# *The Student*



Tracy Thompson

# *The Student*

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY • WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA • FALL 1982

# The Student

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## STUDENT LITERARY CONTEST

### Poetry:

#### First Place

Future Poets  
Timothy Blanc

#### Second Place

Bridge Under a Wet Moon  
Jeffrey W. Gjerde

A Month After Harvest  
Jeffrey W. Gjerde

#### Third Place

Dans la même langue  
Jeannette Sorrell

### Fiction:

#### First Place

Last Light  
Burt Banks

#### Second Place

The Loving Grandmother  
Bob Morrison

#### Third Place

The Indivisible Man  
Deryl Davis

Thanks go to Nicholas Bragg, Teresa Brown, Edna Cherry, Paul Diodati, Theodora Drozdowski, David K. Evans, Robert Hedin, and Stuart Wright.

Special thanks to the judges of the Literary Contest.

### COVER

M. Raye Shoemaker

### INSIDE FRONT COVER

Tracy Thompson

### INSIDE BACK COVER

Becky Garrison

### BACK COVER

Poem by Dennis Manning

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# The Student

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# Salamanca the Enchantress

It was a cool, quiet night. I felt a rush through my body as I heard their beautiful voices sing out in harmony. They felt the music deep down. It ran through their blood and flowed out into that misty air. It flooded the plaza surrounding the Old Cathedral. More music rang out to linger and live in this spirit-filled place. Even the old stone steps felt alive. They are alive with the ages. Our voices call out to them and echo, resonating in the gold reflection of an old street lamp. And the songs — they have been strummed on guitars like this one for centuries. The saints carved out of the golden brown Castilian stone are listening to us. I feel them staring down and absorbing the sounds — the music, singing, laughter, clapping — the sounds of living spontaneously, of sharing magic moments.

They were magic moments, and there were many like these that we shared in Salamanca. *Me encanta Salamanca*. "Salamanca enchants me." These were words so often spoken by anyone who went there and tasted its strong Spanish flavor and danced in its old narrow streets.

The Plaza Mayor, *el corazón de la ciudad* (the heart of the city), cast its spell on us like no other place could. Things happened there. We could sit in the Plaza Mayor at any time of the day or night and watch the "happenings." In the morning the businessmen on their way to work would wave and shout greetings to each other. Mothers would rush to pick up their fresh bread for the morning, and students would grab a *café con leche* before morning classes. In the afternoons, after the shops closed up, the plaza would pulsate with activity. Everyone would stop for a *cerveza* or *vino* with some *tapas* to relax and chat and make plans for the evening. Whether you were strolling or sitting or eating or dancing or (of course) drinking, the Plaza Mayor made it happen.

On Sundays, the plaza strutted and flaunted its "Sunday best." On those clear, sunny afternoons, all the families were there in their suits and shiny shoes and brightly-colored dresses. The whole city came together to promenade in broad daylight and to boast of its warm, expressive culture and close-knit families. We marvelled at their easiness and fun-loving intimacy.

The fiestas were "happenings" of sharing and celebration. The people drew in closely and felt the excitement of their traditions as if experiencing them for the first time. As the music poured forth, they passed jugs of sangria and danced heartily in linked-arm circles. Laughter and shouting came naturally flowing from a people who know how to celebrate life.

Of course, many other little things enchanted us in Salamanca. We loved to see the school girls playing jump-rope in the streets during *siesta*, and we were tempted by *pastelerías* on every corner with luscious things to eat. And there were the cafes and bars. These were our gathering places, where we met, talked, and drank with our Spanish friends. There we argued politics and listened to rockin' Miguel Rios and told jokes until five a.m., and there we learned who the Spanish people really were. We began to understand and feel a part of their lives. It's the people after all, isn't it? The people drew us in with their fast, rhythmic way of speaking and their dark, magnetic eyes. The people were the enchanters. They bring us ever back, to sing with them and walk, arms entwined, through their beautiful city. They have drawn us into their hearts forever, and we will never forget them.

In addition to all the good times we had while we were in Salamanca, we also had a great time learning. Many people have asked me what I learned from the experience of living in Spain, and it's a difficult question to answer. Of course I learned a wealth of information about Spanish history and culture. I also learned to speak the language well. But, I have learned so much more through the experiences of everyday living than just academics. I have come to a new understanding of myself and my relation to other peoples of the world. The semester was a process of "broadening horizons" for me. Although I have always considered myself to be a fairly open-minded person, I soon realized that my vision could be widened if I simply allowed myself to experience new things. Being hit with so many new experiences at once, with no former conditioning to fall back on, was very challenging. I discovered, though, that the key to living in my new environment was awareness and acceptance. The awareness allowed me to be open to each new moment and be a part of what was happening, instead of passively watching from the periphery. The acceptance was equally as important in order to totally enter into the Spanish way of life, even if there were certain aspects of it I didn't like. The best part about this whole process is that it is reciprocal. I found that the more I opened up to other people, the more willing they were to share with me. Everywhere I went, I met total strangers who wanted to communicate, wanted to share a piece of themselves and their culture. That's encouraging in a world of so many apparent boundaries and separations. It seems to me that we're not so very far apart; the world is not so big after all. With an open attitude, the barriers are somehow broken down, and we are all basically just people.



What more fundamental concept could I have learned? Yet, it is an invaluable lesson to me that I will carry with me always, just as I do the memories of that charming city. . .

As I walked home at night through the dark, narrow streets, all was quiet except for a few shouts and laughter coming from the Plaza Mayor. I felt overwhelmed by the sense of history and tradition there. The streets know what they are. They are the life blood of this enchanting place, feeding the feelings of a hardy, loving, expressive people. As I passed through Plaza de Anaya, I read the words of Miguel de Cervantes on a plaque set into one of the walls. The famous writer knew Salamanca well and had also felt its luring charm. The plaque reads:

"Salamanca que enhechiza  
la voluntad de volver a ella  
a todos los que de la apaci-  
bilidad de su vivienda han  
gustado."

"Salamanca evokes the  
desire to return to her from  
all those who have enjoyed  
the gentleness of her life."

The warning came too late for me. I know someday I too will return.

*by Amy Sue Hoey*



Amy Hoey



## The Old Thing. For W. B. Yeats.

And someday these will be  
Days of Yore: Cloud, or  
Star-ridden nights, singing softly  
Lullabies over dreaming trees,  
As Artemis delicately settles on  
The land, and touching, lightly  
Lights the wood. Flowers make simple  
Love in the Garden, and  
That which is Druidic meditates,  
Rocking slowly, back and forth,  
Singing quietly to itself, for  
Here, Sylvanus dwells.

That old,  
Mythic thing here assures itself;  
As fellowship gathers around, lying,  
Tranquility at his feet, as the purest  
Ecstasy often does, the sweetest  
Voice of Rapture is a hum.  
The ancient, romantic thing is silent.  
It fades with the night, for Men  
Come in the misty break of morn,  
Banishing that which is Druidic.  
His dreams are of Deirdre, but  
The Druid of Night has no voice.

*by John Marshal*



M. Raye Shoemaker

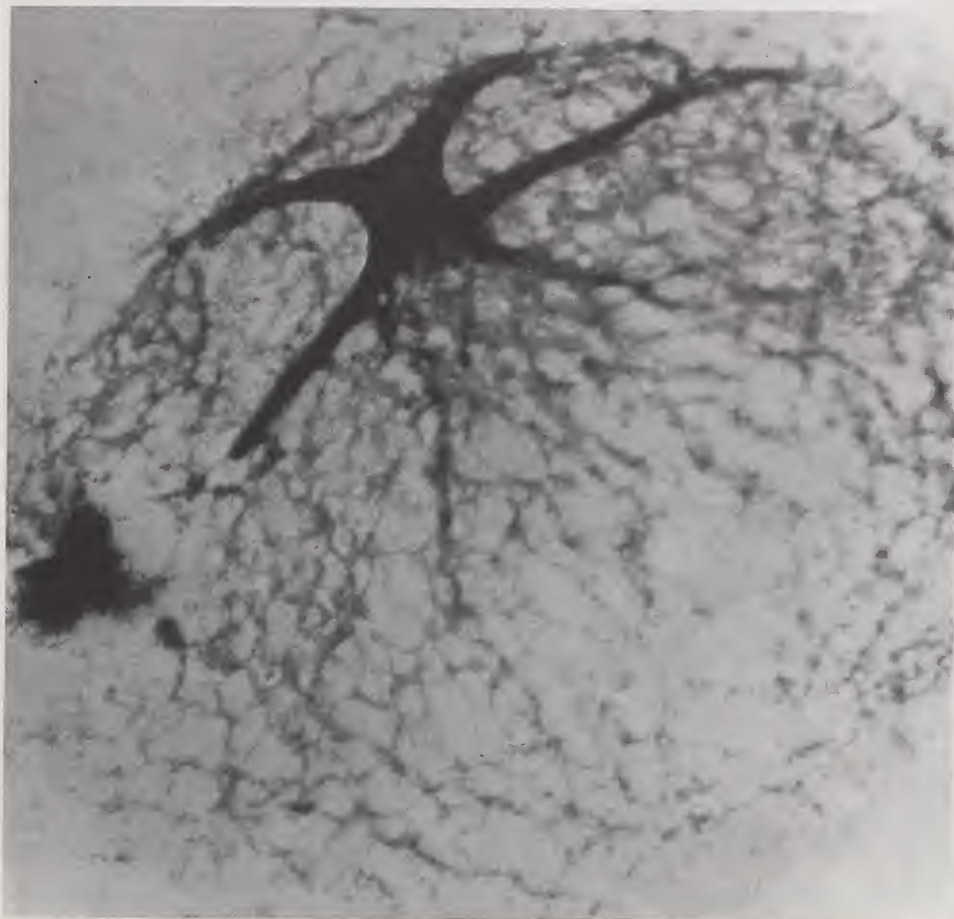


M. Raye Shoemaker

## Photos

She has a certain  
Photo-glow, you know,  
When the camera  
Smiles right back.  
But the how's and  
Why's behind those  
Eyes: Ah, yes . . .  
No photo knows.

by John Marshal



Genevieve Egan

## BEFORE AUTUMN

Yesterday the clouds were serious.  
The sky was filled solid;  
You could smell the depth.

Walkers were dull  
With the sky's weight.  
Birds puffed and curled  
Recalling sleepiness.  
The pond had turned to steel,  
And everywhere trees were  
Thick with leaves.

I walked slowly, hands deep  
In the strange innards  
Of a new wool jacket.  
Thinking the trees  
Must feel like whores  
Waiting in all that finery  
The day before autumn.

*by Timothy Blanc*

## THE NIGHT RUN

The whole valley react'd  
The night so clear  
The moon was like a hole  
Cut through the sky.

Pure light drained  
And bathed the valley;  
Made the chain-link fence passing  
Like a net dripping silver  
And the flowers and vines I brushed  
Seemed slick with moth-dust.

Then the light nourished me  
Made my sweat sparkle  
And touched my heat, igniting  
A thousand tiny flaming arrows  
Loose in my veins,  
Shooting.

*by Timothy Blanc*



# AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES TATE: ON POETS AND POETRY WRITING.

*by Nell Anders and Judith Hiott*

*At the age of 39 James Tate has established himself as one of America's most important poets. His poems not only have an adventurous quality and an element of wit, but also reflect a deep trust in language and the human imagination.*

*Tate's collections of poetry include: Row With Your Hair (1964), The Lost Pilot (1967), The Oblivion Ha-Ha (1970), Hints to Pilgrims (1971), and Riven Doggeries (1979). In addition to writing poetry he has taught poetry for fifteen years. He is currently teaching at the University of Massachusetts, where he has been since 1971.*

*During a visit to Wake Forest on September 27, 1982, James Tate was interviewed by The Student and he responded to inquiries about the processes of writing poetry and what being a poet means to him.*

**Student:** What do you hope to achieve by writing poetry?

**Tate:** One of the basic things is to try to make some sort of sense out of life. You do that by ordering and finding meaning in experience, by revivifying and sharpening language. I hope that the satisfaction that I gain through writing would be available to those who participate as readers of my poems and that they would find meanings and insights into their lives which they may not have been able to articulate or formulate yet. I hope that my use of language would make them consider not just their

own language use, but language use in general — how it can be abused or dulled by media and politicians or by people who don't bother to consider it all — whose one language is watered down and numbed by television. I think most meanings and understandings available to us as human beings are somewhere embedded in the language, and root meanings contain pertinent information.

**Student:** What approach do you take in writing poems?

**Tate:** Just about every possible approach — whatever gets you there. A lot of poems start with a fascination with individual words. That's not enough to make the whole poem, but it's true that one or two words that you may come across start growing, and their implications lead to other words; words lead to sentences; sentences lead to formulated thought. Rubbing one word against another can grow into a whole dramatic setting, and, who knows, by the time you've finished, you may have crossed out those two original words. You won't even remember that they are what started you on the poem in the first place. But equally true, poems can begin with a memory that you've carried around with you for years and years, and finally you have to find a

solution for it. Some brief little childhood vignette — an isolated sense memory that was particular to you and still seems to possess special meaning for you — suddenly starts to form the context of a poem: a smell of leaves burning in a neighborhood remembered from the time you were five years old. The poem which may grow out of that many years later isn't really about the smell of leaves; instead it turns out to be about Old Mr. Nitter, the crank who chased the kid out of his yard and who leads you now, as an adult, to some human understanding of some tragedy. All that started from the remembrance of a smell.

That's what's marvelous about poetry; it leads you into the unknown. The insights you gain there are not necessarily final solutions — it's not as though you explain all the mystery away — maybe all you are able to finally do is point at that mystery as a genuine human quirk.

Poems can also begin from very trivial sources, for example quirky headlines — I don't think I ever used this in a poem, but I wanted to — there was a tiny article in the back page of a very boring newspaper where I lived. I remember it was the dog days of summer with nothing happening, I was unmotivated,

the weather was humid, and I felt so lethargic. I turned to the back of a newspaper, and this headline said, "Disappointing Tomatoes Lack Interesting Bugs." That kind of thing can start a poem — a casual noticing of some humorous thing, of a fragmented piece of dialogue one hears in a supermarket.

I'm not the type of poet who sits around and says, "I must soon sit down and write my poem on what is wrong with the world or what I feel about energy conservation or our China policy." You don't usually sit down with clearly defined objectives. You start with one quirky point, and the poem then starts defining its own perimeters and ambitions, its own limits, its own diction. It's a marvelous thing; in a sense it becomes a self-generating machine. You can see the parts of speech as being equal to some machine. It is self-generating and self-resolving.

I've taught poetry for about fifteen years, and there are not many laws which say, "You can never do this in a poem." In fact, a good poem will rise to prove the opposite. Often when I was a student, an instructor would say, "I want you to write a poem that does this, this, and this." I would, just out of perversity, always fulfill his requirements and then make the poem something totally other than what he anticipated. I was trying to break rules. I don't know why, but probably just to prove that it could be done.

**Student:** How long does it usually take to produce a poem?

**Tate:** There is no answer. I have written what I think are wonderful poems in... a very, very brief time. Occasionally there are poems that poets usually refer to as sort of

"gifts". I've had them, and I know most poets have had them if they would admit it. You may be walking out a door with someone, and literally lightning will strike. You turn around and say, "I'll be with you in just a minute," run back, write a poem in ten or fifteen minutes to which you had never given a thought, and the poem comes out whole and complete. That's a very rare case — very rare, but it happens, and it's magic.

Then there are poems that I would say I go through hundreds of drafts of over a period of... I don't even want to say one year because I know there are poems that I could say have taken ten years. That certainly does not mean constant work. It means that I worked on it for three months and then stopped; a year later I decided it was worth working on again, and I would work on it for another week, but it still doesn't really come to life. This process continues, and maybe after ten years you finally get it right.

Sometimes you don't have to do anything at all. Recently I was looking through a box of random papers. I'd been away from my home for a year, and I had just moved back. I had all this stuff in storage, and I came across a poem written in 1974 that I'd never included in a book; I'd never even tried to publish it. I looked at it, and it was basically a perfect poem. Not a great poem, but it was a really fine poem that I had seen and said, "No, I don't like it," and suddenly, just with the passage of time or a change in the world, it became relevant. This poem was a fairly frightening anti-nuclear poem, and suddenly I felt, "It's really perfect for what it is. It would be meaningful to others, and it's as good as I can make it. I

don't understand why it took me eight years to see that, but suddenly I see it." I prefer to work a poem through to its end without distraction and without getting caught up in other poems or projects. I prefer to stay with the original beat of inspiration if I can, but it doesn't always work out.

**Student:** It doesn't sound like you revise much.

**Tate:** I do revise enormously. I take it as a compliment that you say that because the purpose of a revision is to make the poem seem bold and fresh. So if my poems look to you like they were written at a sitting, that's great. I prefer that, but they aren't. Sometimes if I throw away the initial drafts of a poem, years later I'll think I wrote it in one sitting, and then I'll suddenly come across another box and find out that in fact other early drafts of a poem are absolutely really god-awful and worthless, and I worked like hell to get the poem to the point where it looked as if it were written spontaneously.

**Student:** Do you revise with an eye toward certain things?

**Tate:** Well, I guess compactness would be one of the things. There might be some poems — I don't write these myself too much — where you find a sense of expansiveness. My poems may appear conversational, but they are in fact very tight. There may be an aside to the poem; there may be almost a joke in the poem, or a moment in the poem that breaks up its tone. Maybe it's a somber poem with a sudden spark of levity or humor which seems like an aside. I hope it's there for a reason, to counterplay the main idea or lightly criticize it. That might be the poet's intention. My poems some-



times have more than one voice operating. Not necessarily two separate speakers, but two or three voices of one speaker. So, I just work for sharpness, and for clarity. Clarity doesn't necessarily mean perfect accessibility or increasing simplicity. You make it sharper, into a granite-like hardness so that it is down to its trimmest shape for the purposes of that poem. I definitely would be capable of cutting out the best lines of a poem because in the long run they distract from what I now see as the main purpose for that poem. I said that there may be two or three voices in a poem. I would at the same time say that I am truly looking for a unity too. Otherwise I don't think the reader believes that we're going along in the same way, that the poem seems really to have left its main thrust. Some poems have a way of working in various techniques which in a sense dizzy the reader for a while in order to get him to a certain place. Even Robert Frost's poems do that occasionally.

**Student:** Are there any poets that have influenced you, either when you started — or since then?

**Tate:** Well, when I really discovered poetry and knew I wanted to write, I was a voracious reader, and I am glad that I wasn't totally taken under the spell of one particular author. That can be very intimidating in the sense that it may take more time to find a voice of your own. To answer your question about poets who have influenced me, I would say that at this time we're moving away from the early modern poets. There are only five or six poets that I'd call American moderns. Any poet my age who would say who his favorites are is really

choosing from five or six different poets. Of those five or six poets, I find myself walking a line someplace between William Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens with an occasional need for the eccentricities of Art Craigman and Emerson Klibus. Some people might call Klibus a minor poet, but minor poets are interesting too. Sometimes you can learn almost as much from their failures as you can from the strengths of a major poet's more successful poems.

I also read European poets of my generation. We live in sort of a golden age of translation, I think, but if you can read an original, that's always preferable. Still poets of my generation and even older poets, if only in translation, have really profited from access to world literature. Fifty years ago a poet growing up in this country was expected mainly to learn from English and other American poets. It seems like in the last thirty or forty years we've become more interested in expressing our true independence from England. I don't mean to diminish the greatness of English literature, but it's just that we feel more distinct, that we have our own character. And I think as the literatures of other countries of the world are made more available to us we sometimes find that we identify with poets supposedly more foreign to us than the British poets. My graduate students may feel as close to certain Turkish poets as they do to Thomas Hardy for instance.

**Student:** What kind of advice do you give your students?

**Tate:** I don't have any set of rules necessarily, but I certainly tell them that they can't grow as writers unless they read — unless they are really as pas-

sionate about reading as they are about their own writing. I have very little interest in young writers who are only interested in their own writing. I don't think they are going anywhere. Usually they are only interested in "expressing their emotions," or working out some therapeutic solution to their emotional problems of the moment. Now that's fine, but poets who are mainly interested in that kind of therapeutic expression are not genuinely interested in language. They're interested in sentiment and possibly anecdote. Anecdotes are fine, personal history is fine, if it rises through poetry, through love of language and conscious manipulation of language and syntax and all the other things available to it...and particularly through an awareness of what has already been written. These writers wouldn't be so in love with the sentiment they had just expressed on paper if they had read all of Shakespeare. If they had read a wide variety of literature, they would know that they have to work a lot harder to be successful in poetry. For me, reading is an absolute parallel activity with writing. It is primary. Certainly there are people who are thunderstruck with talent. I think that's true, but they are exceptions. If you look at history you can find a few people who wrote beautifully at the ages of sixteen and seventeen; however, most people have to work through a certain amount of material, a process which is very frustrating and very slow, before they get anywhere. Life does not exactly invite you to be a poet. It's nice when you're very young...but later you realize that it's hard work. If you think you're committed to a lifetime of writing, you can't count on inspiration; you must



have discipline. This is a rather corny metaphor, but I think you have to treat your skill as an athlete treats his body. You have to take your relationship to language seriously. If I don't write for three or four weeks, I'm not going to suddenly sit down and write beautiful sentences. I have to start all over again and get in shape and remember how to use language in an almost muscular way. I'm not interested in a flaccid kind of newspaper writing. To avoid that kind of writing there must be an ongoing relationship between me and the language. I pay attention to it at all times, including when I know that I haven't got it. There are long periods of time when I don't think that I'm operating as a poet, and language goes dead for me — dies in my hands for months and months. This has happened a couple of times for a year at a time, but this doesn't mean that I stop going to my desk and trying to write, because if I keep exercising, maybe I'll get it back. Certainly if I'm just waiting for the lightning to strike, it's probably going to strike someone else who cares more.

**Student:** Are there any specific poets you recommend to your students?

**Tate:** If somebody is really serious about being a poet, then they eventually have got to read it all; I don't care what order they read it in. When I was starting, what was wonderful was finding completely contemporary poets who were actively writing. When I was very young, I got very excited thinking, "Gee, they're alive now; they've so much to say now; they're using our language now." Then I began to work backwards. In the long run it doesn't make any difference which way you attack a

body of literature, but I think it's easier to start with your contemporaries. Then, as you move backwards, your appreciation grows. There are some people who are twenty-eight or thirty years old who consider themselves poets but who have never really closely read Shakespeare. Well, that's alright, because when they finally read him, they're more appreciative, more aware of his absolute specialness in history — much more than when they were eighteen years old and thought of Shakespeare as simply another assignment. When you're older, his work is a total delight. It's a wondrous thing, and you are thankful that there was such a person whose work continues to shine forth with a renewed genius.

**Student:** I was wondering if you had any favorite modern poets and the reasons why you thought they were special.

**Tate:** There are some fine poets of my generation whom I like — such as Charles Semick, Louise Gluck, John Ashberry, Richard Hugo, but I go back to Stevens and Williams. Stevens put together sometimes very convoluted, strange words and images to pursue abstract ideas of the imagination. He is a contemporary of William Carlos Williams, and both of them were very aware of each other. Williams claimed to be more interested in what he called natural speech cadences, thereby breaking what was thought of as traditional English metrics. He thought cadences and rhythms could be gotten from very ordinary people. He was a pediatrician, so he dealt on a daily basis with poor, lower class, struggling people, and he benefited from listening to their speech. So there was a nice counterbalance between

Stevens and Williams on the issues of language use, natural image use, and so on.

**Student:** Are there any personal experiences that you have had which have played a major role in your poetry?

**Tate:** I'm probably not the one to say. My father was killed several weeks after I was born, and I had a classic sort of only-childhood spending a great deal of time alone. I didn't really mind this too much, and I developed a strong imaginative life. I know that leaving home was an important experience — not that I disliked living at home or anything like that — only it was just about this time that I began to write really seriously. Leaving home for good at the age of seventeen opened up all sorts of possibilities for me. I hadn't been strongly encouraged in one direction or another as a child; in fact, I don't believe my mother or either of my grandparents ever said, "What are you going to do?"; they weren't looking towards the future like that; they just lived each day as it came. So when I was seventeen I could pursue any field I wanted to pursue. I knew I wasn't interested in most normal paths; I had no interest in business, and I wasn't very interested in making money. Early on I met some bohemian artistic types who were slightly older than I, and their lifestyle seemed infinitely preferable to me. I was inclined toward a world more open to possibilities. My perception from an early age was that if you were a poet, the whole world was your workshop, and you could justify reading books on horticulture or Buddhism or anything, and that was enriching you for the pursuit of poetry. Poetry seemed to be the least

limiting of pursuits, yet I also realized that it would take a lifetime of effort.

**Student:** Do you feel as if you have been influenced by certain movements in contemporary poetry?

**Tate:** Good art always seems contemporary; I think that's why Shakespeare lasts, because we can still find insights into current situations. The character of men and women hasn't changed so greatly from the time it was perceived and understood by great artists of the past. Whatever is good is contemporary for me.

I've worked through certain things, but I don't think they entirely determined any change of direction. One just absorbs them and is enriched and therefore open to more possibilities. Now since the literatures of the whole world are available, one can learn from poets from everywhere.

I would be hard-pressed to describe what was happening in any kind of general overall way in American poetry. It is hard to capsuleize or put an "ism" on it. There seem to be certain schisms; some camps, but people no longer bother naming them. People no longer stand up and swear allegiance to one camp or another. I think there are some unspoken divisions developing or already in existence. There are poets who, though they don't call themselves this, consider themselves to be realists. As Wallace Stevens said, "Realism is a corruption of reality," and I take that to be the case for most of these so-called realists because they deny so much of our real world. They manipulate reality on the surface level

and claim that they have explained it: "I was out hoeing in the garden, a little puppy walked by, and I chopped its tail off." This is supposed to tell the whole story, but I don't believe it does. This is where I say that I share some views with earlier French poets. I firmly believe that our dreams are a part of reality, that our so-called unconscious minds, though that is a complicated word and issue, are certainly a big part of our lives. All these abstractions are primitive fears; these things color our experience enormously, so experience isn't entirely explained rationally in the way I think some current poets believe it should be. Our apprehension of reality is really multi-leveled for all of us, not just for artists. I think artists have an opportunity to represent the complexity of individual moments of experience if they're willing to acknowledge the different levels that exist.

**Student:** You talked about taking out a poem that previously had not meant anything to you, and discovering that it had meaning. The value of poems doesn't change over time, but does what poems mean to you ever change?

**Tate:** Yes, and I'm not talking about just my own. That's why it's so fun to reread people. But the poem hasn't really changed. It's been right there, and it's wonderful to see how it gets renewed. The longer you're alive, the more interesting that is, because you see a certain artist come in and out of popularity. There is rebirth of attention to D. H. Lawrence; ten years pass, and he's the worst, sloppiest writer, and he's corny about women, and

he's wrong about this, and he's wrong about that. Then suddenly everybody says, "Look, he explains the way we are; he describes us now; he is the author who speaks most to our moment," whereas ten years before he was the author you wouldn't be caught reading on a bus. But the work is still the same. I think the artist is trying to create something permanent and that he's supposed to have almost superhuman intuitive powers to get at those things that are permanent. Sure, it's interesting to record the changing customs and trends of our time, and I think there's a place for that, because when you do it really well, it is lasting. I am not a prophet, and I can't predict how well his work will survive, but Thomas Pincheon seemed ten years ago to be a novelist who was very much capturing the moment of history that we were in, in all its shimmering complexity. And most people I think at this moment don't find him quite as interesting. We'll have to let more time pass to know how permanent he is. But as I say, sometimes an artist who does record the moment is also recording the eternal in us too. So you don't have to write about just mountains and rivers and trees to write about things that are permanent. Fickleness of love affairs, the fear of youth losing its values: these aren't contemporary issues; they're permanent issues. I'm sure in the Middle Ages parents worried about their children not having the same values, so it seems like a burning contemporary issue, but in fact it's an eternal one if written well with understanding and insight.

## "The Blue Booby"

by James Tate

The blue booby lives  
on the bare rocks  
of Galápagos  
and fears nothing.  
It is a simple life:  
they live on fish,  
and there are few predators.  
Also, the males do not  
make fools of themselves  
chasing after the young  
ladies. Rather,  
they gather the blue  
objects of the world  
and construct from them  
a nest—an occasional  
Gaulois package,  
a string of beads,  
a piece of cloth from  
a sailor's suit. This  
replaces the need for  
dazzling plumage;  
in fact, in the past  
fifty million years  
the male has grown  
considerably duller,  
nor can he sing well.  
The female, though,  
asks little of him—  
the blue satisfies her  
completely, has  
a magical effect  
on her. When she returns  
from her day of  
gossip and shopping,  
she sees he has found her  
a new shred of blue foil:  
for this she rewards him  
with her dark body,  
the stars turn slowly  
in the blue foil beside them  
like the eyes of a mild savior.





Brad Fagg

## *Roma*

*The River Tevere wanders  
 weary, but wise —  
 more ancient than eternal  
 Knows flows  
 Sewer of Spirits  
 Well of Sorrows  
 Washes all souls to the sea  
 Quiet wisdom rinses stone and skin  
 Modern ruins scattered around  
 Untouched antiquities  
 Forgotten by all but the River  
 Blood drains from the walls  
 Wine spilled by drunken city  
 Flows to the artery  
 Tevere  
 Purifying with silent breath  
 The poisoned sap  
 Now flowing free —  
 Away from eternal to  
 Eternity.*

*by Carole Ann Peters*



David Evans

## COWBELLS

### I

The clanging of cowbells outside my window  
reminds me of cathedrals with caskets.  
Caskets suspended from rope  
banging inside steel domes in the belfry . . .

The day she died,  
she was lying in that crate, sinking  
into velvet and lace.  
I kissed her metallic hand,  
it smelled like a church candle —  
Fingertips to shoulder numbed with infection  
being too close to death  
like thousands of tiny clappers  
beating on my flesh.

### II

Horse drawn hearse  
hoof beats  
spurs and a rattling cart.  
Sloshings  
of wheels  
ring like  
heartbeats.  
Spears of grass  
rusted with dew  
gnash their teeth  
like grinding old bells.  
And the cold ground is ready  
to swallow her body whole  
like a hallow seed.

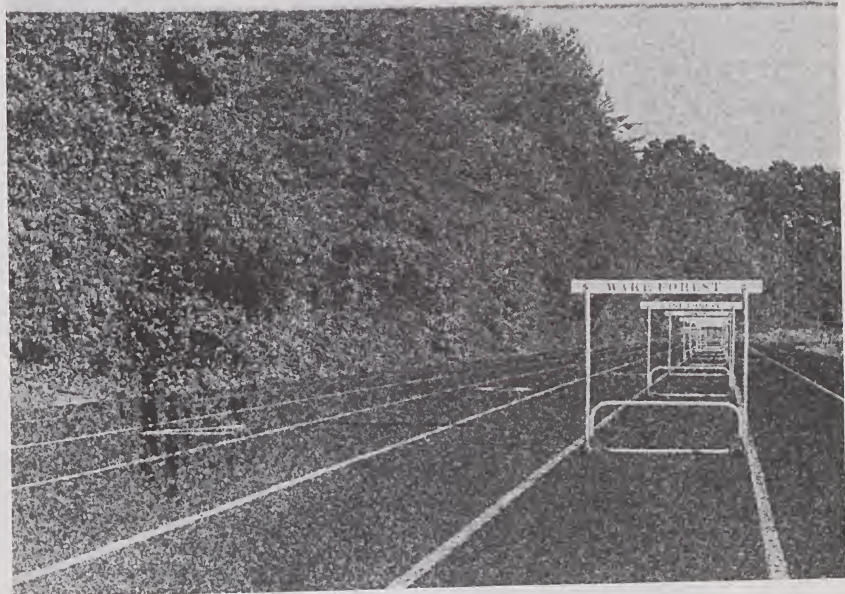
### III

This morning, waking  
I heard cowbells.  
Death is coming white like a bride.

*by Jeffrey W. Gjerde*

# *The Student*

DEACONS



*Winners of the 1982-'83  
Literary Contest*



# LAST LIGHT

by Burt Banks

Saturday evening, and so much work still undone. The inlet with its gentle waves lapping against the sands, against the barnacle-infested pillars supporting the rickety old pier with its dry planks that smell, taste, and almost sound like salt spray absorbed over many years. Dusk knows its way here, and in a moment it shall fall down upon and cloak the peaceful bay — just like the evening before, and long before that. And thousands of years ago the same thing was happening, only without the pier and the harbor lights that now blink on occasionally in preparation for the coming darkness — and without the sounds of distant traffic on the island at the mouth of the inlet. Still, not much has changed, and the gentle waves lap against the sand.

"It's going to be another fine sunset tonight," remarked the man standing knee-deep in the surf as he gazed westward towards the deepening crimson hue. "Still plenty of light left for us, though." Carlos rubbed a large hand over his dark leathery face, amazed to find minute particles of sand trapped in his coarse moustache. Across from him his father, stooped by the weight of many years, nodded assent, acknowledging the comment that was made every night; it never failed that his son should say this.

Taking off his soiled cap and slowly straightening until each vertebra had fallen into place, Old Miguel squinted at the red sun and allowed his eyes to wander to the water swirling about his legs. "The tide goes fast, my son. We must hurry." And he replaced his cap on his head, tucking his white hair in so that it would not blow about in the evening breeze.

"Yes, father."

Closer to shore the wife of Carlos secured the lid on a white plastic bucket and picked it up, dragging it through the surf to a spot strategically nearer the two men. She lowered it, with the top of the container projecting over the surface of the water by only a few inches. "Watch this bucket closely," she admonished her son, who was also nearby. "They must not get away." The little boy, delighting in his important task, stood over the bucket and proudly expanded his brown chest as he stretched his boyish body to its full height. His dark eyes narrowed expectantly. Occasionally succumbing to the curiosity that is endowed to all children in their sixth year, Juan would raise the lid a fraction of an inch and peer inside the plastic bucket, but catching the stern look of his mother's disapproval he would quickly replace the lid, his curiosity apparently satiated for the moment.

The two men cued themselves with a nod to the other, and working in unison they lifted two aluminum poles to which was attached a long net stretched between them. Having raised the net vertically, they simultaneously lowered their poles into the water and began walking towards shore, dragging the net through the brine. After a moment they paused, and feeling the tension in the net increase they lifted the poles out of the water. At once the woman and the little child began emptying the net of the shrimp and adding their catch to the contents of the white bucket. A few of the tiny creatures escaped notice and succeeded in flipping themselves back into the water, but the dexterity of the woman and her son enabled them to capture the greater part.

Drawing speculatively on his pipe and wiping his right hand on his tattered trousers, Carlos spoke to his father as they waited for the net to be emptied. "There goes the last of the fishing boats. It is said that the *Island Princess* brought in a great catch today, like has never before been seen in these parts. This is what the man at the marina told me."

The old man spat into the water. "Bah. In the homeland I did my share. Each day I would bring fish in, and the islanders would welcome me home. I was their great fisherman. But," he added sadly, "that was in the old days, before the great fish were gone and before our leaders were bad." They watched silently as the silhouette of the *Morning Star* slowly and patiently made its way to the mouth of the inlet and to the setting sun, going out past the point of the island. The sharp metallic clanging of a bell buoy reverberated over the water and assaulted the workers' ears.

So many years ago it had been, and yet Old Miguel remembered it vividly as a happier time, before they had crossed the ocean and come to the mainland. He smiled sadly, recalling his own tiny fishing boat that he would navigate among the inlets, weaving his way through the coral reefs, or out to the deeper waters from where he would bring magnificent hauls of fish for his people. His friendly people. They would wave to him or call his name when they passed him in the sunny streets lined with markets; they would toast him at their gatherings; and they would compliment him on the delicious taste of his fish. *Ola, Miguel!* No other on the island was so esteemed, the old man thought to himself. *His* island of friendly people.

The woman looked up from her work, for moments of silence were uncommon during their work. "He is dreaming again, the Old One. He smiles that smile of dreams," she

observed to herself, resuming her duties as she tried to guess his thoughts.

"You know, my son," the elder said, breaking the stillness, "for these twenty years I have been shrimping like this, and I have watched the big boats leaving the harbor every night. Still, I wade around and catch the shrimp that some others will use for bait. Every night I do this. And," he continued, removing his cap and rubbing his head in an attempt to draw a conclusion from his words, "it has been many years since I have been on a big boat. Someday I would like to again be on the other side — catching the fish as they do. It has been too long."

"You shall, father. Someday... I know."

For nearly twenty years the old man had been hoping for this same thing, dreaming of the past that was good to him. But Carlos, being less susceptible to fantasy, thought differently of their life in the homeland; it had not been so very good. Even though Old Miguel remembered himself as a prominent fisherman in the village, he had forgotten about the political oppression that soon ended their happiness. He now overlooked the fact that the family had chosen to flee from these conditions and journey across the great expanse of ocean to the mainland. It seems that he no longer recalled the terrible voyage that had continuously threatened their lives as they took sanctuary in the tiny fishing vessel; the boat had not been constructed for such wild seas that confronted them, and they had all nearly died from exposure. And he had even forgotten that American poverty surpassed a com-

fortable life in the homeland. But elders, mused Carlos, were entitled to their dreams of the past, albeit these dreams were often fabrications of the imagination — illusions.

The two men went back to work, dragging their net through the water while their two partners — the wife and the son — watched and waited. Old Miguel sighed resignedly as sweat trickled down his face and lost itself in his unshaven white whiskers. "At least here we all are together, three generations of us. It is almost like the old days when I was a boy helping my father. The only difference is that we would catch great fish instead of tiny shrimp... but we still have each other and our happiness — just like the old days."

His son agreed. "We have each other and we get by." With these words he, too, had acknowledged a comment that was made every night; it never failed that his father would say this.

Again they brought up the net, and again the woman and the boy pilfered through the catch, saving the floundering shrimp and throwing away the bony fish and the smelly seaweed that interfered with the net's performance. A cry of pain disturbed the methodical operation as Juan picked up a crab that grabbed back. Slinging the crab back into the water, the boy winced as he sucked on his bleeding finger. The old man chuckled. "You are fortunate, grandson. They usually hold on until it thunders." And having laughed sufficiently at his own humor, the elder began to whistle off-key.

The injured child paused momentarily to consider the



David Evans



portent of the old man's words and then quickly forgot them as other ideas crowded into his young head. "Father, how much longer must we work?"

Carlos looked directly into the child's eyes and patiently answered the question that was asked every night; it never failed that the boy would ask this. "Soon, my son. But the man at the marina needs a hundred dozen shrimp by morning; if we hurry, we can finish before dark. And maybe then we will have the money to buy you a new shirt or some new shoes. After all, school will be starting soon and you must look presentable. Yes?" When no answer came, the man ruffled his son's coal hair then lowered the net into the water.

Old Miguel, caught off guard as he stared with rheumy eyes toward the horizon, lowered his end of the net and stated apologetically, "The boat is almost out of sight." Far past the island the boat made its way, now in open water, a tiny black phantom nearly obscured by the brightness of the red sun which had sunk still further toward the point where water met sky. Now a deep shade of purple was forming overhead, and a trio of pelicans flew by, setting their courses for the rotting pier that was their home.

The four continued to work intently at their tasks, speaking occasionally and ignoring the weariness and numbness that crept surreptitiously into their limbs. A hundred dozen shrimp they must have by morning. The man at the marina requires this. And so they work on, intent upon their tasks.

From the island across the water came the faint sound of a radio broadcasting the voice of Patty Paige; Carlos hummed along with the music, ignorant of the words and remembering only parts of the tune. Up came the net, teeming with handfuls of lively shrimp. Into the bucket they went, prevented from escaping by the white plastic lid that was no longer quite so carefully placed on the bucket. Darkness was quickly approaching, and no one noticed the carelessness.

"Just to think, someday I again will be fishing from one of those boats!"

"Yes, father. Some day soon, I am quite sure."

"Father, is it true I can have a new shirt for school?"

"Yes, my son, I am sure of it. You shall have a new shirt." And Carlos smiled at the brightness in his son's eyes while feeling not quite so sure in his heart — no, my son, I am not so sure. Perhaps if your mother does not have to visit the doctor again soon; maybe if your mother is well soon; maybe —

But the mother, knowing this, was silent and only stared at the majestic palm trees on the shore as their fronds waved in the breeze that was slowly increasing in strength.

Unexpectedly the harmony was shattered by the sound of many shrimp splashing back into the water. Too late, the mother and her son rushed to the bucket to find it empty, the last of the shrimp swimming to safety between their very legs, the lid of the bucket floating uselessly nearby. With irrepressible grief Juan burst into tears, bemoaning the loss and angry at his carelessness. "Now I shall never have my new shirt."

The two men stood helplessly, too weary to move, too weary to care. Leaning on his pole, Old Miguel softly spoke to himself, "And now the boat is out of sight. I shall never again fish from a boat."

Desperately groping for a means of dispelling their discouragement, Carlos spoke comfortingly: "Of course you shall have your shirt, my son. And you, father, will someday fish from a boat." And you, my darling wife, will someday be well, he added to himself. "We must work later, that is all. We must have a hundred dozen shrimp by morning."

The last light was gone from the sky. The palm fronds waved silently as shadows against the darkness, and a trio of pelicans, perched on posts protruding from the rotting pier, ruffled their feathers in sleep. A gentle wave lapped against the sandy shore, breaking the stillness. Saturday night, and so much work still undone.



Genevieve Exam

## FUTURE POETS

Remembering fire  
As blinding as deep  
As their own births  
They slide the lead lid  
And their eyes  
Grown soft and huge in the dark  
Burst  
With the rise of the night sky  
And the stars  
Burning to needles.

Dawn makes them run insane  
Like children on fire.  
Most drop exhausted in the day's heat;  
The strongest bathe their hands in ash  
Or gather burned bones to slash with.

By evening a circle is joined  
Around a fire.  
Blackened hands make planets spin  
Across a fallen dome  
And smiling carnivores  
Kill and mate  
In shadows along a scorched pillar . . .

Hoarse screams, shrieks  
And laughter  
Now amaze their throats  
As even gods twist from their hands  
To dance like golden crows  
In the cooling sky of the coming night.

*by Timothy Blanc*

# The Loving Grandmother

*by Bob Morrison*

The day was one of absolute perfection, with the brilliant sunshine burning from a cloudless sky, and a soft, swirling breeze blowing a refreshing coolness in my face. My grandmother stood watching me from the doorway, with a proud grin that seemed so typical of her personality. Whenever I looked at her, I saw in her that strong character, that jovial attitude, that constant display of energy which made her seem forever youthful.

I was playing one-on-one football in my grandmother's back yard with a friend from her small neighborhood. He would toss the ball into the air, at which point we would fight to catch it, only to be instantly tackled once one of us had caught it. On one occasion, while my grandmother was perched in the doorway watching us, I took quite an uncomfortable blow, to which she exclaimed, "Oh Bobby! When are you going to stop playing that silly dangerous game?" I took this comment as any nine-year-old child would; that is, I disregarded it as another "motherly" demand — one that has no significance until something serious does, in fact, happen. So, incognizant of my poor grandmother's fears, I went on playing the game until, after another hard hit, I saw her out of the corner of my eye, cowering and walking away.

Several hours later, I went into her house to eat the marvelous dinner she had prepared for me. A plate full of golden brown sliced turkey was garnished with a generous helping of stuffing and two large mouthfuls of tempting cranberry sauce. The meal's only shortcoming was a bowl of jello. The skin of the jello was wrinkled and frail, like that of a dying old man. I ignored this and heartily ate my food, striving to please my grandmother. Her attitude toward me was as if nothing had happened that afternoon. She was as eager to serve me as a butler would be to serve his master.

"Eat more, Bobby!" she would beg over and over again, frustrating me by using the only form of my name I did not like. "Certainly you have room left for this," she added as she held a potful of steaming macaroni and cheese under my nose. She then hypocritically demanded, "Don't chew with your mouth open!" as she sucked some gravy from her fingertips.

How can one tell his grandmother that her eagerness to please actually frustrates the hell out of him? At that point in my life, I loved her of course, but I was just too young to appreciate the worthiness of her intentions. Her sole function in my life seemed to be to keep me from being independent and having a good time, so unfortunately I built up a subconscious resentment toward her.

Seven years passed until the day that I earned my driver's license. My grandmother was so proud, yet I was surprised to learn how apprehensive she would be to be a passenger in my car. I pleaded, "Come on, Grandma, don't you trust me?" Obviously I had put her on the spot because, as her eyes drooped and her skin wrinkled, she uttered, "Now, Bobby, I have always considered you to be a sensible young man!" By citing her past impression of me, she managed to successfully avoid my question. Of course, I really could not have expected her to come right out and say that she did not trust me. Again, she used the form of my name which perturbed me the most.

After I begged emphatically for almost fifteen minutes, she finally conceded and sat in the front seat. I put the car in reverse and backed up the sloping driveway, noticing that my grandmother's small and decrepit hands were tightly clenched and trembling. Her drooping eyes were beginning to water, and her lower lip was protruding, leaving the frowning lines to either side of her mouth. As I shifted into drive, I asked her why she did not put on her seat belt.

"I don't use those old things!" she snapped, as if I had asked her to stand on her head. "Those newfangled devices are for the birds!" she added. "You just keep your eyes on the road!"

I started to angrily assert, "Well, excuse me for living!" However, before the words could leave my mouth, something struck me, like a blow from a bare fist, that cut off my sentence in the middle. I gazed at my poor grandmother. Her feeble hands that used to hold me as a baby were now shaking like a puppy left out in the cold. Her sagging eyes that used to light up when I would visit her were now glazed and bloodshot. Her contorted mouth that used to smile when she hugged me was now totally dispirited.

Suddenly, I hated myself. I did not know what I had done, nor did I know what to do. I foolishly envisioned my grandmother, once a lively and dynamic individual, as she used to act. Now I sat staring at her shameful, disfigured frame sitting next to me. I realized that I had just done the same thing to her that she had been doing to me since I was a child. Worrying about her well-being, I had blindly commanded her to do something which she considered totally unreasonable. More importantly, when she looked over at me with her lifeless, crying eyes, I realized something else. My grandmother had become an old woman.



**Bridge**  
**Under**  
**A**  
**Wet**  
**Moon**

by Jeffrey W. Gjerde

I

They say it's going to rain, tonight  
but, I'm going fishing anyway:  
Fishing under sweating cement cupped like a brassiere  
Sheltered from the rain like so many before me.  
The murmuring of rain and river  
like suckling children calling their daddies home.  
I think of the ducks  
and the green rings  
on the water, carefree and drifting.  
The Wet Moon reflecting  
thick brows and brown skin,  
and the silhouette  
of men eating raw fish.

The breast of the river  
nurses these ducks and these men  
with its mud-filled fish-milk.

II

Bridges only cry in the rain  
Cry for the northbound aliens  
Mexicans  
El Salvadorians  
Hondurans  
Argentinians  
Cubans  
hiding restlessly in the dark.  
I can feel the sweating palms  
of all those who have taken shelter here.  
Their breath quickens at the sound of thunder  
and a thousand whites of eyes  
gleam and glare like candles in their family's clay-brick huts.

III

Silence, alone, breathes here.  
To break it means death.  
Their cement ribs heave  
as trucks, jeeps, and cars approach  
and roll them over.  
Huddled together in camps of warmth  
they await daybreak and the ending of the rain.  
And each can hear his starving children calling him home.

IV

Democratic bridge, unloosen.  
Let yourself swing free.  
I kneel for the night, for the rain,  
for the wiper blades of the idled jeeps on the bridge,  
and for the splashings of all caught fish.

## A MONTH AFTER HARVEST

Waiting for morning's  
thunder to stop  
I sit in the open fields  
where the furrows look like war trenches  
listening to the earth's blood  
bead on the hay like pearls.  
I smell my father's sweat in the soil.

The rain beats to  
three blind mice . . .  
I imagine my mother cooking in our midwestern kitchen  
and my polio-stricken father  
hunched over the plough  
shuffling his feet to keep up  
with the harness bells of the swayback  
jingling like tambourines.

Seeds come down like rain.  
A clock strikes once.  
The showers stop.  
I am lying inside my father again.

by Jeffrey W. Gjerde



# The Indivisible Man

by Deryl Davis

It was two hundred meters from the entrance of the cell to the wall outside. Actually, his was the third cell down. There was a priest in the first cell and a small, old, bent woman in the second. He had heard they were "collaborators" and entirely useless. He knew no more than that.

It was very hot, so hot that the sun's rays could penetrate through the holes in his madras shirt and burn red a circle of skin. He had a blanket wrapped around his legs and his thighs because of the coolness of the night, when the bitter wind blew through the sands and into his small window. He lay there on his back upon the canvas cot, the sun pouring through the window, his eyes closed and his right arm slung across his face, protecting it from the sun. He judged it was noon by the heat and by the droning of the bombers overhead. He counted six when listening, saw four when he opened his eyes. It was hard to focus at first, but when his vision had adjusted, he could see the sunlight glistening off the silver sides of the planes. Each one looked like a star twinkling at night in a very pale, very blue sky.

He had jumped from the plane, but had no idea where he had fallen. The wind had come up strong at night, driving across the sand, with no trees, nothing, to stop it. It had blown him far off course. Then again, it was his first real jump, and he was not the best at operating the parachute lines. His right arm had become entangled, and, in the process of straightening it out, he had allowed himself to fall too far to change direction. Still, someone had tried to stay with him for awhile, yelling at him "Pull right! Pull right!" and "For God's sake slow down!" He remembered he couldn't move except to turn his head to see who it was, and the neckstrap burned under his chin. He didn't see anyone. It was almost as if the man had been a ghost, following him down into the eerie glow of the white sand. Then the voice disappeared and was replaced by the howling wind as he dropped.

When he hit, it was in a small palm five miles inland from the coast. He came crashing through the tree and fell into the sand, landing on his legs, but falling to his stomach. He lay there, propped upon his elbows, coughing up blood, thanking fate that it had not landed him on a house or on a farm or on the rocky side of the sea. He unbuckled the straps of the harness across his chest, slid his arms out, and bent down to unbuckle the bottom straps. A searing pain, like someone driving a spike into the vertebrae, ran up his spine. For one second it was very hot, then very cold. He continued to unclasp the straps, working carefully, afraid that he might tear the soft tissue in his back. Dragging himself by his arms,

he crawled out of the harness, and left the rest of the parachute in the palm. When he stood up, his head swayed, he became dizzy, and blood ran from his nose. He tried to walk, then fell into the sand with his mouth open.

He awoke as the officer struck the hand pistol in his side. He lifted his head, still aching, and spit the sand out of his mouth. It was daylight, and he could see the dark form of the little man leaning over him, speaking rapidly and gesturing with the gun. He did not understand the quickly spoken French and shook his head. Then two other men bent down, grabbed his arms, and coldly dragged him crying to the jeep. He felt as if he were burning all over. The men laid him in the back of the jeep, and they raced over the dunes.

He slept several days, and awaking, found himself washed, bandaged across the chest, and dressed in a clean shirt. A razor, a toothbrush, and a comb had been neatly lined up on the shelf of the window. Later, when he could think clearly, he decided they must have given him a drug.

Not long after, a very young uniformed man, no more than twenty, stepped into his cell and read a list of charges in English. "The prisoner is condemned as a spy," the young man said, "and can expect the due punishment reserved for such under the law. . . the prisoner's sentence is to be carried out as quickly and expediently as possible." The young man's voice was very soft, his skin as pink and tender as a young child's. And his eyes were round and very moist and so completely blue that it was impossible to tell just where he was looking. There was a silence of several seconds after the charges had been read, and the prisoner imagined the pink-toned young man giving him a gun and leading him out some secret way. Then they heard the drone of the planes. "You will have your meal soon," the young man said, and stepped out of the cell.

He had thought a lot about it since then. He pulled the blanket from his legs because it had become intensely hot, threw it on the floor, and stood with his face against the window. The sunlight was steaming off the wall outside, and there was a slight breeze licking his face and blowing sand in his eyes and in his hair. They had brought him some more cigarettes with his breakfast, or lunch, whichever. He couldn't remember what time it was, he only remembered that the planes had already been over. "I counted six," he thought, "but only saw four." A group of soldiers marched by, the officer shouting the cadence, the sun sparkling off their rifles, just as it had danced upon the sides of the planes. "And too," he reflected, "if you don't count the number of the men, you'll think there are many more than there are. Is

it that angry men, marching harder and shouting louder, fear death less?" He opened the cigarette carton and found three cigarettes remaining. He didn't feel like smoking them, thinking he would give them to the soliders. But he changed his mind, remembering how cold and inhuman the soliders were and that he would not want them to enjoy a cigarette. Not any of them. He decided to keep one for himself and give the two others to the old woman and to the priest, if he would take it. "I don't see why he wouldn't take it," he thought. "It wouldn't matter now, if it was against the religion or anything. No one would have to see him with it." Suddenly, a great desire arose in him to watch the priest smoke a cigarette. He thought of picking up his food plate and throwing it against the cell door until the guard allowed him to give the priest a cigarette and watch him smoke it. "There are no rules anymore," he would tell the guard. "This man is about to die, and he can act in any way he wishes." He imagined the guard would smile at this and delight in forcing the priest, if necessary, to take the cigarette. "The guard is an inhuman monster," he thought. Then he realized it would be he and the guard against the priest. He remembered that he had first thought of offering the cigarette to the soldiers, that somewhere inside himself, he had identified with them. But he admired the priest, in a way. He seemed ready to face what he had to face. He never heard him crying or pleading his innocence before the guards as the old woman did.

What he had seen of her disgusted him. Her cries only made her less human. And at night, hearing her whimper, he imagined she had become a wild beast, scampering about the floor, clawing at the walls, desperately trying to find an escape. She was rabid like an animal, and death could only put her out of her misery. When she cried, the guards laughed at her and called her names. One of them always shouted in English "Save your tears mother, you will die soon enough!" The prisoner didn't know if she understood that or not. Probably not, he decided. But hearing it, he could feel their hatred.

A small, rag-tag crowd had assembled outside the window of the priest's cell, sobbing as they stepped up one at a time, and he blessed them. "He is more calm than they are," the prisoner thought, "yet he is the one about to die." He listened to the English priest speak to the people of the glory that awaited him. Again the prisoner wondered, "How can the people cry for this priest, if they believe that he is bound for such a place? Death appears to be his salvation. They do not believe it," he thought. "They do not believe there is such a place, or they would be laughing and singing now." His eye caught the razor in the window shelf, and he thought, "If they truly believed, they would wish to die. They would envy death and hold it in their hands like a small child." He imagined the mob committing a mass suicide in the street, and seeing someone without the means of achieving success, he would fling his razor out through the window to the joyous crowd.

But he feared death. He was not so sure that there was more to be after this day. In fact, he had decided long ago that he did not want more. He only wanted to feel alive once. It did not matter if it hurt. It did not matter if, like a python

crawling through his organs, he burned all over inside and felt like he would explode. Nothing else would matter at that one time but feeling alive. He could kill a man or bomb whole cities of children and it would not matter. But now he felt nothing besides fear, and that was why he admired the priest. "The priest fears death, but masters his fear," he thought. "He wants to scream, but he says nothing."

The soldiers had stopped marching and were rushing toward the crowd to disperse them. The people scattered like dogs before the men, and soon no one was left outside the priest's window. The prisoner thought again of giving the priest a cigarette, but decided he did not want to after all. He would give one to the guard instead.

A group of soldiers began to line up facing the wall outside, and he watched as the officer, the same little man who had stuck the pistol in his side, began to drill them. They were slow at first, but he noticed that they got better. He wondered if it were really two hundred meters from the entrance of the cell to the wall outside. "If a man ran as hard as he could, how long would it take him to get there? Twenty-four or twenty-five seconds?" He knew they would be very slow seconds, the heat dragging him down with every step, the white sand rising to cover him up, and then the wall. He would slam into the wall, his fingers digging into the holes in its side, and it would be red-hot and glowing, and it would burn him.

When they came for the priest, the old woman thought they had come for her. She began to scream and cry and tell them that she had done nothing as had the prisoner and the priest, who were surely guilty of foul acts. But they opened the priest's cell and took him out, and she shut up. The prisoner watched through the window as they marched the priest out. He was young and clean-shaven and walked slowly over the hot courtyard, as if each step were a great burden. Then the priest did something which puzzled the prisoner. He stopped where he stood, and without moving, looked straight up into the blazing sun for several seconds as if he expected something. Then a guard grabbed him, pulled him to the wall, and turned him to face the line of soldiers.

The prisoner did not watch the priest after that. He laid down on the cot, placed one ear to the cell wall and put his pillow against the other, and smoked a cigarette. By the time he finished, they had come for the old woman. He thought it strange that he felt nothing as they dragged her out. He watched at the window as they laughed, and saw the terror in her eyes as they slung her bent form up against the wall. She was screaming, and twice she fell in attempts to get away. He watched entranced as the soldiers finally became impatient and shot her several times where she lay in the sand. The prisoner knew he had hated her. He guessed he was like the soldiers after all.

He smoked another cigarette, the second, and then they came for him. The same uniformed young man opened the door and motioned him out while staring at the floor, as if he were afraid to look into the face of a man about to die. Then, together, they walked out through the dark hall and stepped into the sun. It was hotter than the prisoner had expected. Some soldiers were relaxing, leaning on their rifles as if the



day were over, while others stood waiting in a stiff line. He walked slowly, with the uniformed young man at his side, and he counted his steps while the sun's rays beat upon his head. It was hard for his eyes to adjust to the brightness of the light, but about midway, he stopped and looked straight up into the sun as the young man motioned him forward. He walked again.

The sand was smooth under his feet, and he remembered the night he had come diving out of the sky with the sand glowing beneath him. He turned to the uniformed young man and saw the blueness of his eyes, like the ocean and the night, and then he looked into the sparkling guns of the firing squad, and he felt the heat, and he knew he was alive. He knew that in facing death, he was facing life too. He was sure the young man understood. "Liberté et la morte," he said aloud. "Liberty and death." Then he stepped up to the wall and into the blazing sun as the silver, glistening bombers roared overhead in the very pale, very blue sky.

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## Dans la même langue

Les arbres et les fleurs,  
Le ciel et le vent,  
En France et ailleurs,  
Parlent tous et chantent  
Dans la même langue.

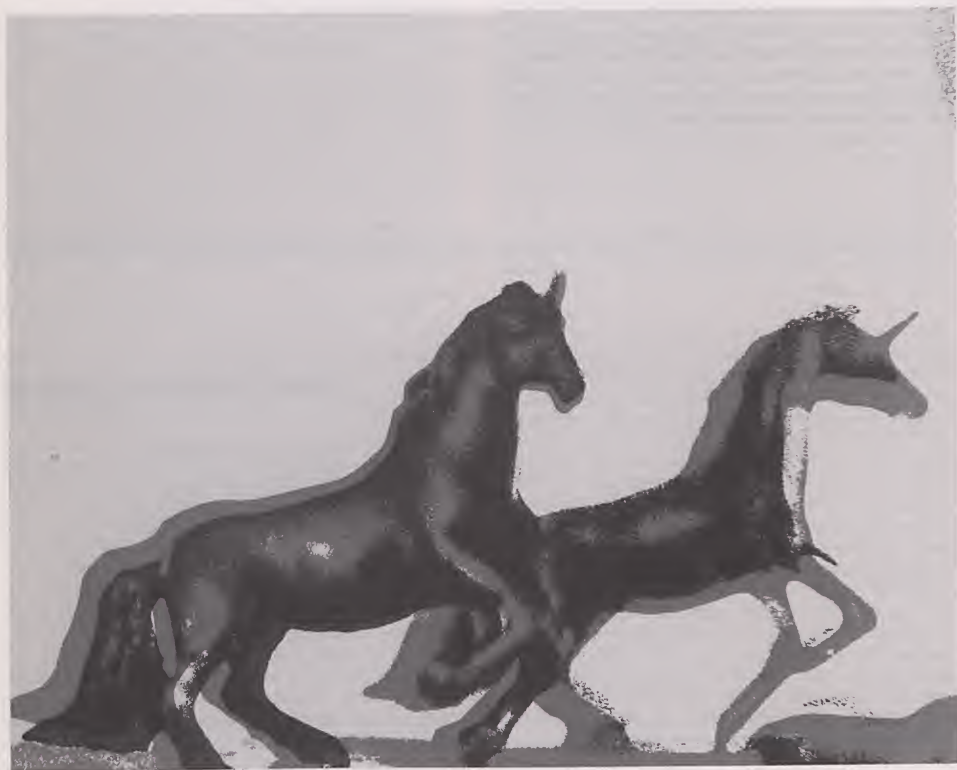
Est-ce qu'ils se demandent,  
"Êtes-vous catholique?  
Venez-vous d'Irlande,  
De Russie or d'Amérique?"  
Non. En voilà la raison.

Ils m'ont expliqué  
Qu'il ne s'agit pas  
De nationalité  
Ou de religion,  
Parce qu'ils sont tous frères.

Les arbres et le vent,  
Le ciel et les fleurs,  
Ne sont pas comme des gens —  
Eux, ils se comprennent.  
Ils parlent la même langue.

by Jeannette Sorrell





M. Raye Shoemaker

## Ancient Voices of Children

Strains on a hazy road in Granada,  
the ancient voices of children  
low to the earth,  
crawl through thick, dusted lips  
massaging an etherized peasant —  
sombbrero house tipped at 100 degrees —  
clips over like a dropped baton  
signaling the cricket to commence  
its hind fingering of a xylophone  
of thin bones —  
a dithyrambic pizzicato.

*by Dennis Manning*

Man creates his own out of desperate need  
The Christian god is a reflection of the times  
As was the raging Yahweh of old traditions  
The latter credible, the first hypocritical.

I found him last night among the flickering candles  
Briefly him, crouching like an African idol  
Flowing with the sway and chants of bald Hindu monks  
Perfectly united in all contradictions.

He is body and soul, spiralling ever outwards  
Multiplied in all and any direction  
Power, cause and state — teaching, yet also learning.

Carnivore, he feeds on the music of our souls  
Harmonizing the discordant and the joyful  
A holistic being ravaging withered space.

*by Heather Maclean*

# Themes of Recurrence and Unity in the Vision of an American Poet.

## An Interview with Richard Eberhart

by Alan Mark

Richard Eberhart's poetry possesses a thematic and stylistic unity which seems remarkable given the wide variety of his experiences. He was born in Austin, Minnesota in 1904 and educated at Dartmouth, receiving a B.A. from that institution in 1926 and at St. John's College, Cambridge, receiving an M.A. in 1933. During those years he served as a sailor on various freighters and also tutored the King of Siam's son for one year.

His first collection of poems entitled *A Bravery of Earth* was published in 1930 and since that time he has published numerous other poetry collections, a book of verse dramas, and an anthology of war poetry with Selden Rodman called *War and the Poet*. His long career in teaching began at St. Mark's school in Massachusetts during the 1930's. He left that position in order to enlist in the U.S. Navy where he served as an aerial gunnery instructor until his discharge at the end of the war. At this point he became an executive in the Butcher Polish Company, a family business; however, this did not prevent him from becoming a founding member and the first president of *The Poets' Theatre* in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This event led him back towards a career in the academic community which he achieved when he accepted an appointment as professor of English and poet in residence at Dartmouth in 1956.

His visit to Wake Forest is one of hundreds which he makes to various university campuses each year. Aside from these activities, he has also served as the Consultant in Poetry for the Library of Congress and is a respected member of the National Academy of Arts and Sciences.

His position as one of America's finest poets has been formally recognized through the presentation of various awards such as the Bollingen Prize in 1962 and the Pulitzer Prize in 1966.

**Student:** In your poems about death —  
"Cover Me Over," "The Recapitulation," and "Imagining How it would be to be Dead" — you speak of various types of afterlife, such as a peaceful sleep or a oneness with the universe. How do you imagine the afterlife?

**Eberhart:** Well, first let me say that when I wrote

Cover me over, clover;  
Cover me over, grass.  
The mellow day is over  
And there is night to pass.

Green arms about my head,  
Green fingers on my hands.

Earth has no quieter bed  
In all her quiet lands.

I thought it was a poem about sleep. Of course, you can't remember exactly how you felt years ago, and I can't even remember the year this was written, but it was an awful long time ago. I don't believe I was thinking about death at all. . . I was feeling tranquil, I suppose, and I was awake and alert, but I just felt how pleasant it is to sleep. I don't think it was a death poem, and yet I must

tell you that this poem has been read over the graves of three or four of the members of my family already. So it can exist both as a sleep poem and a death poem. As to anything after death. . . I believe very much in the eternal recurrence of life and death; that death is a part of life or an extension of it, that you couldn't imagine life without death or at least you could imagine it but it's *useless* to imagine it that way. So there's the eternal cycle. We were born — we didn't ask to be born — so all of us are sitting here in the flesh that we didn't elect to have. We weren't asked what century we wanted to live in, we didn't ask what kind of a mind or body we would have, and you see it's all terribly complicated, it really is. When you see crippled children or people who have birth defects, or you see these harrowing movies of little kids who will never be able to walk and then they try to invent things to *allow* them to walk. It just breaks your heart; and yet Shakespeare was born, Milton was born, think of all the great people of the world who came into existence just as fortuitously — they didn't ask to be one way or the other. Life is a trial; it's — to me — quite a mystery, and





Susan Mallaly

then when you come to the death part — a lot of people have always asked “Why do you write so much about death?” I have two or three answers. One I thought of just recently: I don’t think you could write a good poem about death unless you were pretty strong. In other words, I think if I were pretty near death right now I wouldn’t have the energy to think about it or to make any pronouncement about it. To write a poem about death that can be read must mean that it has a lot of life in it. There you are back in this world of paradox: you have to have a lot of life in you to entertain the notion of death and make anything out of it in art. Secondly, I think it would be a better world if everyone thought about death, but this would be an unpopular idea. For instance, if all the 220 million Americans in our nation — if they’re all terrifically conscious of death and that they’re not going to be here very long, or at least in ninety years, or eighty, or seventy or thirty, wouldn’t we be better people, wouldn’t we love each other more and not kill each other so much? If you love mankind enough and everybody is a brother or a sister, a father or an uncle, or a lover or a friend but not an enemy, why would we have to spend billions and billions of dollars getting more arms to kill the Russians? It’s absolutely absurd! I believe a lot in life, and so therefore I don’t believe in death. I think the more life we can celebrate and enjoy while we’re on this planet, the better we are. So I don’t want to give you the idea that I’m afraid of having written about death. I believe death is perhaps the

greatest topic (maybe love is greater than that), but why is it that so few great poems have been written about birth? Wouldn’t you think that birth is the greatest thing about us? That’s how we got started; if we weren’t born we wouldn’t be here... it’s as simple as that. Why didn’t the great poets write about birth? Well, there’s only one or two great poems about birth. John Milton wrote one, “A Hymn of the Nativity,” but everybody who ever thought at all has written about death. Every mind has to think that we won’t be here and the fact that death keeps its secrets so terrifically. Nobody really knows what happens the minute you die and nobody comes back to tell you, and therefore it’s the most excruciating and yet fascinating thing to think about. Now, when you’re young, you don’t bother about it much and it depends on your temper, but as you get older, you realize there’s no other way out; there’s simply no reversal. I can’t be going through time back to a happy childhood. I’m going to death, and whatever happens to me I’m either going to be cremated and then you’ll be breathing me through the air, or I’ll be put in the ground and the slow decay will go on for centuries. I don’t think it’s a morbid thing to think about, but let me say one other thing — the hardest thing — I’ve been putting it off. There have been two or three great thinkers in the world: certainly Jesus Christ has to be numbered as one, Buddha, I would say, was one, and Mohammed. Jesus Christ had the greatest, the most impossible, and the most enthralling idea of all:

that if you believe in Him you’ll have eternal life. That He has taken on the sins and sufferings of mankind for us... He came to us from God, but in the form of you and me and mankind; and so He suffered our trials and tribulations, then He died on the cross for us, goes back to heaven and so on, and then we can get there too. Well, I must say if you’re a hardheaded rationalist you can’t believe this, but just think — millions and billions of people have believed it for nineteen-hundred eighty-two years, and will continue to do so because it’s one of the biggest ideas there is. There’s something more to life than what meets the eye, and there’s something more to life than our limited time here.

**Student:** It has been said that your recognition of the Beatnik poets helped them become recognized nationally. What kind of relationship did you have towards these poets, Ginsburg in particular?

**Eberhart:** I had a very tenuous relationship with them. In 1956 the *New York Times Book Review* asked me if I would write a little piece on what was going on in the literary scene out on the West Coast, because there had been rumors that some great things were going on out there. So I went out there and saw all of them and then wrote the piece in my own book, and the interesting thing about it is that it’s readable twenty years later; the little book you’re referring to was reprinted in 1976. I admire Ginsburg very much — I admire his work. We were both in London representing America in 1973 at the London International Festival, a cou-

ple of poets pretty diverse in character, but we both were there. I was doing my thing and he was doing his thing. He was more popular than I because he was asked to read twice and he was at sort of a height where he was playing on bongos and saying weird sounds, elemental Indian sounds and so on. Of course I had met these people (including Kenneth Rexroth) at the end of World War II. I ended my naval career as a lieutenant commander in the naval air station at Alameda just across from San Francisco in 1945, and at that time we met Rexroth and his wife Marie and all those people who came around there. I was the only man in uniform and they thought very little of me because they were all trying to be anarchists and they never wore neckties, and they were open-shirted, youthful, and full of revolutionary spirit. They were appalled to see me come into the room with a beautiful uniform on — you know, very starched and proper — but I noticed that before the year was out some of them wrote me to recommend them for a job of some kind or another. I was aware that a new mode of writing poetry was in the offing out there, and I got onto it fast. And then historically it turned out that what I said was just right, so it probably did help them out because they were unknown, and this sort of categorized them and that *Times* article was read widely. Don't forget that the little piece in the *Times* would have been forgotten right away. It's only interesting now that it came back twenty years later.

**Student:** Do you believe that a

responsible poet can be politically active, and does political involvement constitute a risk for the poet?

**Eberhart:** I have thought about this a lot, and I'll try to be brief. The bulk of English poetry and American, too, has to do with the themes of birth, growth, hope, aspiration, suffering, despair, and death. All these great universal topics: a love of nature, a love of God, or a love of your wife or your husband or fellow man or something like that. So that politics really doesn't enter into it so much. I don't know whether it should or shouldn't. You can say that Dante's *Divine Comedy* was politically oriented, because he was kicked out of his native city, and he decided to create a great art work. And you know he put all his enemies into hell, so there *has* been political poetry. Augustus Caesar invited Virgil to write a poem about his times; even though a lot of it is about literal history or farming, the whole of the *Aeneid* is in some way a political poem. You can say that perhaps Ezra Pound's *Cantos* are political in some way, but I think that outright political poetry is usually bad and is forgotten. Now let me give you an example: when I started to write in the '30's, it was during the Great Depression and so there was a lot of politics going on, and into our country came the great boogey man of the Communists. Fortunately for me, I never got caught up in it, but many of the poets I first knew or read became Communist — or were so far over to the left that they were really terribly oriented towards a political system that wasn't ours. I have to

say that there was not a single political poem, I think, about the Communists that was any good in the first place or has lasted; you can't find them. Furthermore, most of those poets just faded out of the picture. Now, I would have to be very scholarly to document this and put this all into print but I think in general it is true that the poets who lasted and the poems that have lasted are beyond politics.

**Student:** Do you find it easiest to write at a particular time of the day?

**Eberhart:** No, I'm completely wild and sporadic. All through my life I've never been able to sit down at a certain time and say "I'll write a poem"; I don't know how I do it, but I can give you the general contour. All my life I've had periods of ups and downs the way everybody does. I'll have a period of maybe half a year where I can write all the time, more or less, and then I'll have maybe two or three months where I'm down in some kind of trough. Through all of the years since I was fifteen or sixteen I've written poetry by chance. I can write at any time of the day or night — twilight is a favorite time of mine by the sea, for instance, or early in the morning. I have a friend, William Stafford, who is a fine poet — one of our best — and I'm always amazed at that man because he is completely opposite from me in this regard. For thirty years Mr. Stafford has gotten up at 6:00 in the morning and devoted three hours to the business of writing poetry. He gets up with the sun, he sits in front of his desk and he writes —



absolutely makes himself do it. His whole career is dependent on this business-like approach to the creative effort, and then he has to run a living or get breakfast or do the rest of the chores. Now, I'm entirely unlike that; just any time of the day or the night, if I'm feeling in the mood, I find that I write very well.

**Student:** I noticed in an anthology of your poetry a work entitled, "Portrait of Rilke." Do you feel that any of the European poets or European movements have influenced your work — people like Blunden?

**Eberhart:** Oh, Blunden. . . I knew old Blunden. No, he didn't influence me at all. The only people who influenced me were William Wordsworth, William Blake, and Gerard Manley Hopkins; I'm their child, and they're my fathers, and I owe everything to them. These three moved me tremendously, and they still do. I just wrote that poem about Rilke because I saw a picture of him standing in a doorway, but he hasn't influenced me at all.

**Student:** Do you ever feel that people miss the meaning of your poems?

**Eberhart:** Oh, yes! I know of two poems that have been absolutely misconstrued. One is called "For a Lamb," a little 8-line poem about the death of a lamb who was lying on a pillow of daisies which I saw when I was 23 years old on the outskirts of Cambridge, England, and I thought at the time that this death was just an example of eternal recurrence that I mentioned earlier. It was a beautiful phenomenon of nature, and yet it was dead; and yet the flowers were alive, so there

you are. . . it's life and death always going around. Well, at Plasburg a young professor was lecturing on these eight lines and he thought the first stanza was about the Fall of Man and the second was about the Resurrection; he gave a technical Christian interpretation, and was able to do so because of the title "For a Lamb" — the Lamb of God and all that. He carried on for half an hour, and I just couldn't get it. So I got permission to speak and gave my interpretation and sat down, and he kept droning on. Finally I got up and said "Well, I'm sorry to say, but I happen to have written this poem"; that made everybody sit up and take notice, but even after I gave my interpretation as the author, they would not pay any attention to me, so then I realized that once you put a poem on the page it belongs to the reader; it doesn't belong to you any more — you're dead. Its fate is in your head or somebody else's head, and you can't determine it anymore. And also "The Cancer Cells," which I wrote — later I read a long report by a student who thought it was a communist poem — the most comical mistake I've ever heard about a poem of mine. "The Cancer Cells" was just a poem about my having seen in *Life Magazine* a test tube full of cancer cells that had grown out of the test tube in a kind of flowery way and were absolutely beautiful, and yet you had instantaneous recognition that they were also deadly. So there was life and death right together. I got a poem out of that and some student wrote a whole page saying it was a communist poem; you wouldn't believe they could

misread a poem so totally.

**Student:** You have quoted Robert Frost as saying that the poet "has to begin as a cloud of all the other poets he ever read." How can one tell when one has begun to be truly original?

**Eberhart:** You can only tell, I suppose, if you live long enough and somebody tells you that you are. I mean that seriously; it sounds silly but even today I feel as if I'm practically newborn or that I have a long way to go. You can only succeed in poetry if somebody tells you that you're good. Let me give you an example. I wrote "The Groundhog," along with three other poems within a day. And one of them turned out to be "The Groundhog," which lasted a long time, one of them lasted for awhile but now people have forgotten it, and two were absolutely winnowed away. I have thought about this for a long time. The point I want to make is that my passion, my intensity or my feeling for life was the same for all four poems. In other words, I was so innocent, absolutely innocent, when I was writing these poems. I wrote them because I had to write them. Now, isn't it interesting that three of them vanished, and one of them became a mountain top and it's already fifty years old. How do you figure that out? You figure it is because the fraternity of critics and poets and professors who rule the system — they have decided that "The Groundhog" is a better poem than the other three; therefore "The Groundhog" is still there, it's still put in anthologies. They don't like the others. Maybe in a different world, or a better world, or maybe in an Indian

world or a Chinese world or some other kind of world, they'd think some other kind of poetry is better. Maybe the ones that were thrown away would be up and "The Groundhog" would be down.

**Student:** In the verse play entitled *Devils and Angels* do you see yourself as the character called the Author? What in general was the purpose of the verse plays you wrote?

**Eberhart:** I'm so glad you asked about those. One of the most exciting times in my life was after World War II when my wife and I went to live near Harvard. About three years later we found a group of poets around Harvard. They were all friends, and they'd all written lyric poems in published books and everything. There were John Holmes, Rick Wilbur, Robert Lowell, me and at least four or five others. There was a whole stable, you might say, of poets, just longing to do something and all full of energy. Peace had come and we had time to think about art, and we all dreamed up the idea of writing verse drama. Our goal was to equal William Butler Yeats' theatre in Dublin. We thought we ought to make one as good as that. We knew we could never be Shakespeare, but we thought it was worth trying to get out of depicting a simple emotion which is the heart of a lyric. America in the whole of poetry has done best with the lyric; that's what we're best at; the ejaculatory, short, passionate exclamation. So in 1950 Lyon Phelps came to our house — he was the grand-nephew of William Lyon Phelps. I got terribly excited about it; I was in the family

business then but had plenty of time to write and be with literary people, so we founded the Poet's Theatre and I became the first president of it. We began in January of 1951. Thornton Wilder was there for a year at Harvard, and he was such a wonderful man. We had a meeting to get this all started and Thornton paced up and down and gave a great talk to about one hundred people who were there asking them to contribute to the theatre. Thornton, although he wasn't a poet, loved the drama, and he gave us a great boost which was very important. If we could write good plays, or if we could educate people to love verse drama, that would be fine. So the reason that plays got written at all is because of the enormous enthusiasm we had for the Poets' Theatre, which lasted for ten years. The first three or four were the most exciting, after that it sort of frittered away. Our place of business burned down, and we got to such a low ebb that when Sir Osbert Sitwell and Dame Edith Sitwell came, we had to ask them if they would talk at Harvard in order to raise money, and that was a mighty high thing from an artistic point of view. They came and raised a thousand dollars for us, those two marvelous people, and people showed up to hear them and they just passed us the thousand dollars. It was too bad our plays couldn't earn that money themselves. The theatre didn't really make it, and we weren't as good as the Abbey Theatre; nobody turned out to be as good a verse dramatist as William Butler Yeats, and we all thought we were going to be. I must say we did some awfully good work,

and I got a whole book of verse plays out of it. The verse drama *Devils and Angels* is just an example of my eternal recognition of opposites: There's good and evil and the devil in us and the angel in us. I suppose you could say the Author was me, but I wouldn't say so. It was conceived by me and it was the interlocutor between these two kinds of people.

**Student:** How has your vision of the Greek spirit colored your poetry?

**Eberhart:** Well, I don't like to be stuffy, and I suppose a lot of people think classicism is pretty far back now, but I was exposed to Greek at Dartmouth under Professor Nemiah. I'm not a fanatic about it, and I don't claim to be a real heavy Ph.D. kind of scholar, but I think that it's perfectly obvious that the Greek spirit forms the basis of Western Culture. To this day it's still true, and the only thing that's knocked it at all is communism. The classical spirit has to do with the idea of tragedy, but it's not adverse to the Christian idea, so all the Western people have been conscious of Greek tragedy and conscious of the Christian hope. Now I think we are so hip on science and on technology that the majority of our effort is certainly not in liberal education at all. The classic spirit is still hovering around somewhere but we don't really live by it very much.

**Student:** How important do you think punctuation, capitalization, and rhyme scheme are in poetry?

**Eberhart:** I'd have to separate those out. I think punctuation is very important. I used to love to spend hours over the



subtleties of a comma, I really did, and I'll give you one example. People throw the word genius around a lot but I.R. Richards whom I knew very well wrote a long review of my first book, *A Bravery of Earth*, in the last number of the *Irish Statesman* in Dublin in 1930; in that article he called me a genius and I was absolutely appalled. I don't want to be a genius, I just want to be a happy fulfilled human being. I think the nearest I ever came to genius was in the "For a Lamb" poem. In the last two lines it says:

"Say he's in the wind  
somewhere,  
Say, there's a lamb in the  
daisies."

If that comma weren't in there it would be a common line but in the context that comma is absolutely important. So I think punctuation is very important indeed. I think people like E. E. Cummings overdid it to some extent, but after all he had a lot of imagination and he did all kinds of new tricks with punctuation; that was good, but nobody has followed Cummings.

Now you talk about rhyme. I think poetry is probably going back towards classical restraint and rhyme. I'll give you an example. I have a friend, a young man who must be thirty by this time, who was in my class ten years ago at Dartmouth; he just sent me a manuscript which he has worked on for ten years. This man seriously wants to be a poet. His poetry has gone back to classical strict form, heavy rhyming and complete control. It's like Bach rather than Beethoven, and it was very readable and fine. Maybe that's the way poetry is going to go. It can't go any farther to the left than Ginsberg's long, unrhymed lines. I call those types of lines spewing; you just spew out of your being anything you've got inside of you.

**Student:** How do you feel about revising your poems?

**Eberhart:** Well I've never been good at revising, and I believe in inspiration. I believe in inspiration. I believe sometimes that the poem is given to you, that it's the master of you, and that you are really the passive vehicle. You've

got the power in your hand to write the poem down, but it comes out of the totality of your consciousness and is given to the world by the spirit. On the other hand, in all of my poems written throughout all these years, I suppose this inspirational bit that I'm talking about would represent maybe only five percent of my total production. "The Groundhog" itself was written in twenty minutes and I didn't change a word, not even a syllable, and it's lasted fifty years — well, it's just amazing. Let's say one hundred other poems in all these books of mine have probably been worked over as thoroughly as they can be, but you have to take stock after you have the poem. You must look at it as if you were somebody else, and then you try to improve it, and lots of times you can improve it. But don't forget that it's just a fifty-fifty chance that you make it worse. Why do the guys who are so keen on revising think the poem can always be better? They might make it worse just as readily.

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### "FOR A LAMB" by Richard Eberhart

I saw on the slant hill a putrid lamb,  
Propped with daisies. The sleep looked deep,  
The face nudged in the green pillow  
But the guts were out for crows to eat.

Where's the lamb? Whose tender plaint  
Said all for the mute breezes.  
Say he's in the wind somewhere,  
Say, there's a lamb in the daisies.



"THE CANCER CELLS"  
by Richard Eberhart

Today I saw a picture of the cancer cells,  
Sinister shapes with menacing attitudes.  
They had outgrown their test-tube and advanced,  
Sinister shapes with menacing attitudes,  
Into a world beyond, a virulent laughing gang.  
They looked like art itself, like the artist's mind,  
Powerful shaker, and the taker of new forms.  
Some are revulsed to see these spiky shapes;  
It is the world of the future too come to.  
Nothing could be more vivid than their language,  
Lethal, sparkling and irregular stars,  
The murderous design of the universe,  
The hectic dance of the passionate cancer cells.  
O just phenomena to the calculating eye,  
Originals of imagination. I flew  
With them in a piled exuberance of time,  
My own malignance in their racy, beautiful gestures  
Quick and lean: and in their riot too  
I saw the stance of the artist's make,  
The fixed form in the massive fluxion.  
I think Leonardo would have in his disinterest  
Enjoyed them precisely with a sharp pencil.



M. Raye Shoemaker

## SHE SLEEPS LIKE A ROMAN

She sleeps like a roman.  
Solid, sternly serious  
And thoughtless as in prayer.  
She is sleep-entombed  
In a darkened necropolis  
Where sunlight has no power to move  
And the alarm is not enough.  
It is for me to crack the sarcophagus lid  
Take sleep from her eyes  
Like an ancient mold  
The gluing seal breaks  
And before her eyes see  
They sit dull  
Temple jewels removed from the grave.

*by Timothy Blanc*

## IRELAND

Ireland  
a rebirth,  
baptism of pure white snowy foam,  
crystal waves reach the rocks  
in leaps of glistening joy,  
Gray granite cliffs,  
staunch and imposing,  
defy the glowing liquid below.  
My lungs are cleansed  
with sharp salt spray,  
my spirit warmed by summer sun,  
my soul renewed  
in this all powerful  
land, sea, sky  
Ireland.

*by Amy Sue Hoey*

## Twilight

Twilight — purple blue,  
Crystal clearness of the sky.  
A half moon already risen,  
Shining singly with bright  
    white light.  
Dusk — such a moody word,  
A feeling of fading colors.  
Nothing stays the same;  
Soon silver shadows will emerge,  
Glowing in soft silky moonlight.  
Twilight — a strange time of day  
Or maybe night.  
Such a fleeting moment  
Of silence and subtle beauty,  
Waiting  
for deep night to come.

*by Amy Sue Hoey*



# Ricordi Di Venezia

by Barbara Williams and Paul Diodati

In the Fall of 1971, Wake Forest University held its first classes in Venice, Italy. Each semester since then a Wake Forest professor and a group of 15 to 25 undergraduate students have gone to Venice to study, travel, and experience the Venetian way of life. Each professor offers at least two courses in his discipline, and Italian professors teach Venetian Art History and Conversational Italian. The students are asked to supplement their class work with trips around Venice to see historical landmarks, to talk to Venetians, and to view works of art.

Venice is located on the northwestern tip of the Adriatic sea, at the top of the boot of Italy. The city has developed on islands in a lagoon which is protected from the sea by a string of sandbars. The 160 islands that form Venice are divided by canals, but are connected by bridges and ferries so that foot traffic moves just as freely as boat traffic does.

The Venetians walk everywhere: to school, to work, to shop and to visit friends; but all of the supplies that feed the city are carried in by boat. There are mail boats, water ambulances and fire boats as well as the huge delivery barges. Heavy boat traffic moves mainly along the Grand Canal and the rest of Venice seems very quiet in comparison.

There are no cars in Venice. People who drive to Venice cross the lagoon by a long bridge to a modern parking area. There they must leave their cars and enter the city either on foot or by boat. The effects of the lack of automobiles are remarkable, even magical.

Most visitors to Venice are surprised by the richness of the city's history. The islands of the Venetian lagoon were already inhabited in the 6th century

A.D., and the cluster of islands that now forms Venice proper was an important trading center by the 10th century A.D. By the time America was being settled by European colonists, Venice had passed her prime as the "Queen of the Adriatic." In 1798, just as the United States was beginning its history as an independent nation, Venice lost her 1000 year old independence to Napoleon and his troops. Throughout the city there are reminders of the different periods of Venetian history; from the early Byzantine decorations of the Church of San Marco and the 16th century churches of Palladio to the Neoclassical architecture of the opera house 'La Fenice,' every period is represented.

The spot where Wake Forest University's Casa Artom now stands has an interesting history. Casa Artom is on the lower end of the backward "S" of the Grand Canal, on one of the islands that make up the Dorsoduro, an area where the land is more firm. Since the islands there are slightly higher and more stable, they were some of the first to be inhabited.

The earliest known evidence of a building on the site of Casa Artom is a will dating from September 3, 1326, which is preserved in Venice's State Archives. According to the will, there was a house known as the 'House of the Tower,' which had been bought in an auction by Giovanni Venier, who was called "il vacca" (the cow). The information in the will suggests that the house had been built in the 1200's.

In the early 1400's, a descendant of Giovanni remodeled and expanded the Venier family home. The new 'Palazzo dalle Torreselle' was three stories tall and obviously the house of a merchant

family. The ground floor had a large doorway over the Grand Canal, storage rooms, and a mezzanine which housed the business offices. The two upper floors served as the living quarters of the family. The few views that exist of the gothic palace show that it had an L shape with a courtyard in the "L." The decoration of the facade was quite elaborate in the style of Venetian architecture of the period. Above the whole structure, on the side wing of the palace, rose the tower that made a significant mark in the Venetian skyline and gave the palace its name.

The gothic "Palazzo dalle Torreselle" was divided, sold, rented, and willed to new proprietors many times in the following 350 years, but by 1800 the palace was no longer suitable for habitation. Documents from the period describe the edifice as "ruinous" and "perilous to safety on the canals." The owners of the house could not afford necessary renovations, so the government stepped in. The property was auctioned and the palace was razed to its foundations.

In the 1820's the house which is now Casa Artom was constructed over the foundations of the gothic palace. Casa Artom is two stories tall and has a mezzanine in one part. An arched central doorway gives access to the house from the Grand Canal while at the back of the house there is a high wall separating the courtyard from the public walkway. The wall is broken by two doors which lead into the house. Until 1950 the house was owned by private people who may have used it as residence, but who also left space on the lower floor for a carpenter's workshop. In 1952, however, the United States of America bought the

property and made it the seat of a consul. Only eleven years later, in 1963, the consulate was moved away from Venice, leaving the house empty. Sometime later, when Wake Forest University began searching for a location for a study program in Italy, Graham Martin, U.S. ambassador to Italy and alumnus of the university, aided in the university's leasing of the house from the United States. On July 11, 1974, the house was dedicated to Dr. Camillo Artom, an internationally famous biochemist who came to the United States in 1939 with his wife Bianca as a refugee from fascism. Dr. Artom was a professor at the Wake Forest Medical School on the old campus, and later at Bowman Gray, until 1969. Bianca Artom now teaches the Italian Language at Wake Forest and travels to Casa Artom each summer to act as director of the house.

The following article is a collection of reflections by two students who have spent a semester in Venice.

Outside of the train window the hills are rolling by. The whole countryside is a dismal patchwork of grey and green. The cool grey has clamped down over everything; winter has begun. We pass through villages and fields; the tiled roofs, bell towers, and 'Agip' gasoline signs are familiar landmarks. Everyone is drowsy in the heated compartment. My companion is dozing, his head cushioned by his rolled up down vest. An Italian woman is sitting next to him, holding her daughter on her lap. The little girl, bored by the first hour of the trip, fell asleep long ago, but her brother is busy with a book of word games. Beside me are two elderly men who chatted with us earlier, but who have brought out their newspapers, making it understood that the conversation is over.

How strange it is to be here, barreling through the Italian countryside so far from home. I have taken many a train ride since my arrival in Europe three months ago. That first trip seems so long ago. . . .

I had arrived in Rome by air, and after a few days of sightseeing I was ready to make the trip north to Venice. Having gotten up at 5 a.m., I was in Rome's

Termini Station waiting for the 6:40 train to Venice. The track was almost deserted, but I was surrounded by luggage. Two large suitcases (one brown, one yellow: each weighing forty pounds), a backpack over my shoulders, a tennis racket in my right hand, and a Konica slung around my neck to help keep me from falling backwards, were all the companionship available. Fitting in the train door and getting up the three steps was the hardest part, and once I had put everything away five feet above me, I had to get my Eurailpass validated.

Completing this task I sat back and watched row after row of cypresses, olive trees, and low hills pass by. In Mestre the view out the window changed from vineyards to four-story concrete buildings and the train divided, one part heading for Trieste and the other, my part, heading for Venice. Soon I was on a bridge with large expanses of water on both sides, watching pairs of small, thick wooden poles moving slowly away from me. Emerging only about ten feet above the water, they were tied together at the top, forming inverted v's and cutting up the lagoon diagonally. I learned later that they were markers for the fishermen of the area. Before long the wooden posts gave way to a large wall with VENEZIA — S.L. (SANTA LUCIA) on it. The train stopped. My thoughts switched abruptly from the lagoon to a river of people trying to squeeze through a little door, only to descend into a sea of even more people beside the train. Porters pushing empty dollies against the current of tourists, mothers clutching and shouting at wandering *bambini* (children), stationary elderly couples breaking the flow of people and watching impatiently as porters pass them by, young backpackers zigzagging through the traffic ahead of them — all were trying to eventually make it those last hundred yards to the train station. So was I. Bravely refusing the porters, I managed to carry everything to the front of the station, a large boardwalk on the Grand Canal.

Accustomed as I was to seeing streetlights and wheeled vehicles, all that I now saw moved on water. In front of the station, clustered around the small, green domed church of San Simeone

Piccolo, were a multitude of boats, Venice's vehicles. The small chestnut-colored motorboat with a private compartment and a pointed bow was a taxi. A long, flat barge carrying crates of fruits, vegetables, and other supplies took the place of a truck. A Venetian with a yellow hat and a long oar in his hands reminded me of Venice's special means of transportation: the gondola. Dwarfing all of these boats was a long, oval-shaped craft moving slowly towards me; it was composed of a top and bottom of the same white metal and shape, and the passengers on its deck looked like the middle layer of a sandwich. These are the buses of Venice, the *vaporetti*. The smaller version of the submarine-shaped boat, the *numero due* (number two) is faster and has two levels; one for loading and one for seating passengers. I headed for the floating platform where the boats seemed to be loading. As I got onto the platform, the *vaporetto* arrived — ramming against the side of it twice and causing my carefully adjusted balance to disintegrate. Fortunately, I had my suitcases to lean against. Following everyone else amidst mutterings of "scusi, scusi" (excuse me), I got on the *vaporetto* and headed downstairs for a seat. Mistake. I had to get off on the second stop which was at the Accademia and I had had no idea it was coming up so soon. Once the Accademia stop was announced, no amount of "scusi, scusi" or "permesso" could help me. The Venetian who controlled the metal sliding gate kept it open for only a few minutes and I barely got onto the third step of the stairs leading to the unloading platform of the boat when it pulled away from my stop. When I finally made it to the gate, the *vaporetto* was floating quickly past Casa Artom, my destination. Sure enough, the next stop was on the other side of the Grand Canal at San Marco.

After several minutes of indecision and contemplation about a possible fifteen minute walk with all my luggage to the house across the Accademia bridge, I gave in to reason and found a *facchino* (porter). With the help of friends, he transported my luggage via gondola to the other side and got me quickly to Casa Artom for 10,000 lire. Sometimes it's easier on your arms to admit to being





Paul Diodati



Amy Hooy



a tourist.

These days I do not feel as much like a tourist. I know how to use the vaporetto and I can walk to the Post Office without getting lost. And, unlike the two-day visitors of Venice, I have found certain spots of the city that are special to me. The Customs point, for instance, is one place to which I constantly return.

I'll never forget the summer evening when I first walked to the point. I had been homesick; so homesick that I could not bear to stay inside Casa Artom where everything reminded me of home. I burst out of doors into the tiny alleyways of the neighborhood and found myself closed in on all sides. I needed space. I needed room to think. My feet started moving. I crossed the tiny bridge next to Casa Artom, then turned to walk through another alley to the next bridge. I passed the glass shops and the gondola station and walked through the tiny square of the church of San Gregorio. As I walked through another alley I looked straight up to catch a glimpse of the sky. On either side of me were the cold walls and firmly shuttered windows of Venetian homes. Crossing a wooden bridge, I found myself at the foot of the church of the Madonna della Salute. I walked past this church, brilliant white against the black sky, and only stopped when I reached the point of the island. I sat down, letting my feet dangle above the water, and felt my head begin to clear.

Sitting on the point, I had all of Venice spread out before me. Over my left shoulder was the Grand Canal, full and wide, its majestic palaces pouring light down onto the water from open salon windows. A group of gondoliers, their gondolas laden with happy tourists, passed before the Gritti Palace Hotel and snatches of accordion music drifted toward me. Turning the other way I could see all of the Giudecca Canal and across the canal to the Giudecca itself, a long group of islands with lush gardens masked by a facade of buildings. In front of me, though, lay the open jewel box of Venice. The huge expanse of the harbour which came lapping up just beneath my toes was encircled by the twinkling lights of the Piazza San Marco, the Ducal Palace, the Church of the Pietà, the point of the public gardens,

and the island of San Giorgio Maggiore. I was enchanted.

A warm breeze stirred around me and reminded me that I had been homesick earlier. Homesickness had left me. Looking around, I saw a city that had existed for hundreds of years; three and a half months would be nothing in comparison.

Bells. Ringing above the maze of *campi* (small squares) and *calli* (alleyways), they signal the way to mass on Sunday mornings. Santa Maria della Salute, the church closest to Casa Artom, towers above the Dorsoduro section, yet can't be seen from the small campo and alley behind out house. Once a week I'd shut the door on the familiar sounding English conversations of our little world of Wake Forest in Venice and go out into the stillness of tiny bridges, narrow passages, and steady arches that lead towards the church. Following the sound, I'd walk from one *campo* to another, every now and then disrupting a group of pigeons nibbling on the ground or scaring away one of the many cats that abound in Venice. The fluttering of wings, echoing of hard shoes on the paving stones, and ringing of bells all merge to lead me on towards the seventeenth century church of Baldassare Longhena, built as a gift to the Virgin Mary for deliverance from a plague.

Passage through the final *sottoportego* (archway) reveals the source of the summons, two white towers rising behind the main dome of the Salute, each with its own set of bells. Just as the sound, which by now drowns out my footsteps, reaches its peak, I walk into the church, leaving behind the colorful contrast of gleaming white and deep blue for a new, darker combination of grey marble and yellow sunlight. This filters through the dome's windows to fall upon the center of the circular nave. The chiming of the bells begins to fade and soon the clearer, high-pitched tone of handbells signals the start of the mass. The circular nave is surrounded by six chapels, each equidistant from the center, and it is the heart of the church, although the altar is in the back. "Padre nostro, che sei nel cielo..." — the deep voice of the Italian priest bounces off the huge columns of marble that

support the dome, and the congregation begins to recite the prayer in unison. The voices rise up into the dome, echoing off its walls as the solid statues which line its base keep watch over the people. Candles flicker, the dark-colored painting of the Madonna above the altar stares patiently over rows of kneeling people, and the service continues.

Pizza. Someone outside the train compartment door just said something about pizza. I'm so hungry. Tomorrow night when I get back to Casa Artom I'll try to get some people to go to the "Trattoria San Trovaso" with me. The pizzamakers at "San Trovaso" are the best. My favorite pizza is the *capricciosa* which has ham, cheese, mushrooms, and tomato sauce on it.

The waiters at "San Trovaso" have gotten to know our group by now. They always greet us with a friendly *ciao* and are patient when we try to figure out different dishes on the menu: *spaghetti alla carbonara* is spaghetti with bacon, cream, and cheese; *spezzatino* is small pieces of meat cooked with vegetables — that must mean stew; *scampi* is some sort of seafood, but we can't make out exactly what. I can see the waiters holding back smiles as we imitate the Venetian accent while making our orders.

After our meal, when we have all paid and said goodbye to the waiters, we tend to split up into two groups — one going back to the house and the other going to "Gelati Nico" for ice cream. I usually go to Nico's. In fact, I go to Nico's almost every day. At the beginning of the semester I used to walk there under the hot after-lunch sun. The store is on a sidewalk that borders the huge Giudecca Canal and there is always a cool breeze blowing there. It has been cold the past two weeks, but the walk to "Gelati Nico" still conjures up images of our first weeks in Venice. Nico is a pleasant person. We have never spoken much, but we have come to a certain understanding. He recognizes me now and always starts to prepare a *gianduiotto* when he sees me approaching. Mmm. Gianduiotto (John Dewey-auto). A stick of chocolate ice cream that tastes like milk chocolate with almonds, buried in a cloud of whipped cream. It's

always best when it starts to melt. I try not to taste it until I reach Casa Artom. Well, maybe just a taste, but I mean to save the rest until we're back at Casa Artom. That one bite is really good. I should have another one. Yes, they say that a 'gianduiotto' is best when it starts to melt, but I like it fine even before it melts. I'm almost to the bottom and I'm still far from the house, but now it has started to melt. This is my favorite part . . . To this day I have never carried a gianduiotto through the doors of Casa Artom, but there's no reason why I shouldn't keep on trying.

Walks. *Passeggiate* in Italian. A clear, blue sky forming a background for it all, the sun's light glimmers on the surface of the little canal behind our house. Small barges and plain black gondolas sway back and forth along the sides of the canal, secured to white concrete posts connected by rusting iron bars. Just across the calle from the canal, Venetian mothers with their children

walk in and out of the various shops. Towering over them, a continuous succession of three and four-story buildings, each a different shade of brown or red, cut up a slice of the sky and come within three yards of touching one another across the alleyway. These often lead to small squares, each with its own old, white well, which children on tricycles ride around while mothers sit on nearby benches.

One of these squares is the Campo Santo Stefano, a meeting place for many of the people going to San Marco, the Rialto, or to our section, the Dorsoduro. Children on roller skates pass by its old well, while others at one corner of the campo kick a soccer ball against the walls of the old buildings, determining goals by where the ball hits. Adults find rest and refreshment at the outdoor cafe near the Church of Santo Stefano, sitting at tables under umbrellas marked "cinzano" and watching people pass by. Most of the people in the campo are there only temporarily. In contrast, the

church stands immobile watching over the commotion, giving a permanence to an otherwise constantly changing scene. The church, with its high ceiling and dark interior, offers quiet and a chance to escape the campo's bustle.

I leave this campo as the sun sets over the tile roofs and facades of the palazzi on the Grand Canal, and I head back over the Accademia Bridge to our own little palazzo which, although it is overshadowed by the Salute and other palazzi, still reflects the deepening red of the water on its own facade.

"Venezia — Santa Lucia" — the conductor rushes by the outside of my compartment rousing me from my daydream as the familiar lagoon gives way to the train station, only fifteen minutes from Casa Artom. Having just returned from a weekend in Interlaken, Switzerland, I'm ready to go back to Casa Artom and add further experiences to the ones which the train ride has just brought back to me.





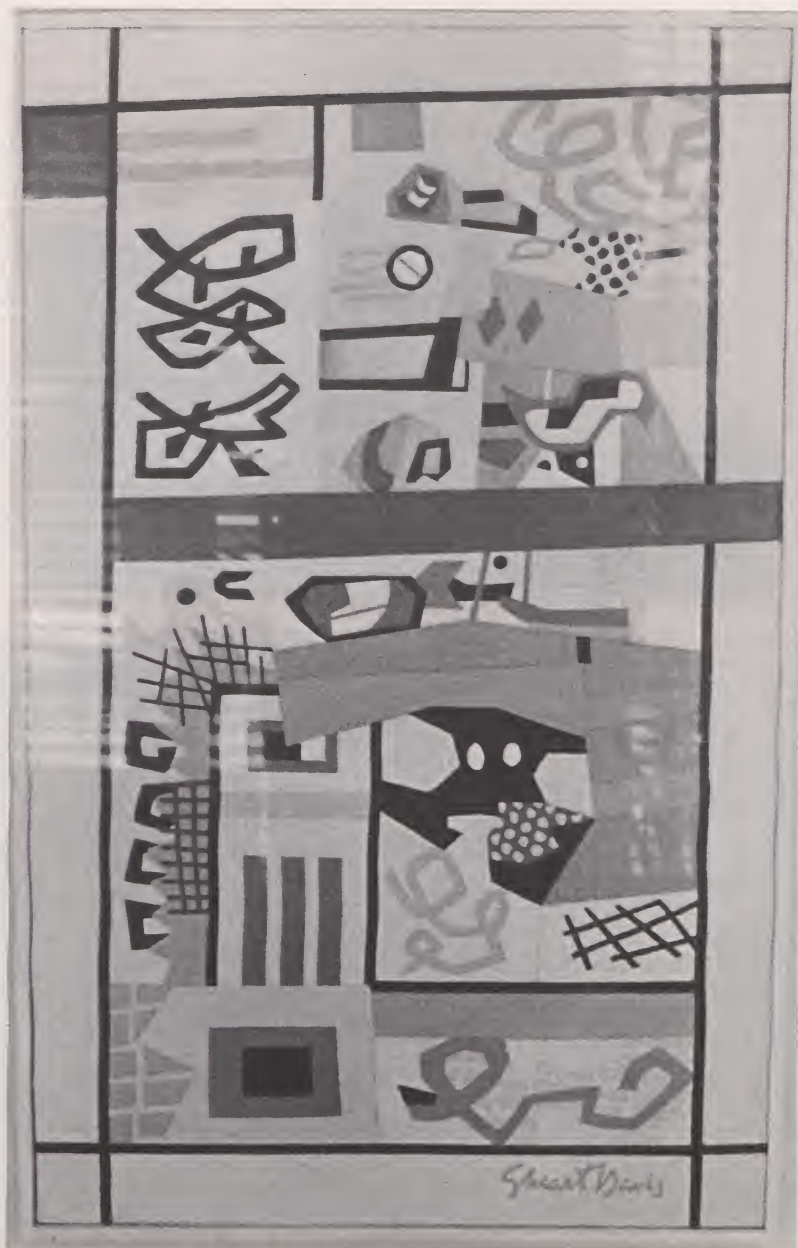


Paul Diodati



Paul Diodati





On loan from a private collection

# REYNOLDA HOUSE: DISCOVERING THE AMERICAN HERITAGE THROUGH ART

In 1825 an artist named Thomas Cole was discovered in New York City by Colonel John Trumbull, the president of the American Academy of Fine Arts. His depictions of the New York Hudson River Valley became known and liked, and they provided the impetus for the development of the first truly American school of painting. For the first time, the people of America saw on canvas the beauty of the American wilds which were at the same time being described in the literature of Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper. Romanticism, which had begun in Europe, had spread to America, but in doing so it had taken on distinctly American qualities. American artists accepted the Romantic ideal of "oneness with nature," but the nature with which they related was manifest in the landscapes of their homeland. The art that came out of their feelings contributed to one of the first surges of nationalism in the United States, and attempts by artists to use European techniques or subjects were harshly criticized.

From 1825 to the mid-1870's, artists explored the wildernesses of North and South America searching for new sites to move their spirits and brushes. Wilderness explorations were also a part of the nationalistic movement of the time, and Americans were excited to see on canvas the wilderness which by "manifest destiny" would some day be a part of the United States. This movement in American landscape painting became known as "The Hudson River School," having been named after the area in which the movement was initiated.

Because of its nationalistic quality, "The Hudson River School" is the focus of the art museum and arts discovery program at Reynolda House, the renovated home of Richard Joshua Reynolds which was opened to the public as an arts museum in 1965. The museum presents a heritage of American painting representing nationally known artists from 1755 to the present in a setting which is itself an American architectural achievement representative of its time. The house, the collection, and a series of programs which delve into every form of American art provide those who visit the house with an awareness of the American ideals which have produced the many styles of our nation's art.

The core of the collection inhabits the very heart of the house. Along the walls of the living room and around the balcony are paintings by the Hudson River artists and their followers. These paintings include *The Old Hunting Ground* (1860) by Worthington Whittredge, *Rocky Cliff* (1860) by Asher B. Durand, Thomas Cole's *Home In The Woods* (1847), *Sierra Nevada* (1871-73) by Albert Bierstadt, and *Orchid With Two Hummingbirds* (1871) by Martin Heade. Astonishing in its beauty and detail, *The Andes of Ecuador* (1855) commands attention from any viewpoint in the living room. It is the first South American landscape by an American, and it brought Fredrick Church, the greatest of the Hudson River painters, his fame. All of these paintings seek to recreate nature which, according to Asher Durand, was "fraught with high and holy meaning." For Durand, nature's imitation was the highest aim of the artist.

The Hudson River School paintings established a scenario for the continuance of American art in the American tradition to the present day. Likewise, the other Reynolda House artworks are a presentation of the American traditions in art that grew out of the first American painting school and the artistic trends of its time.

Recognizing that American art before "The Hudson River School" also reflects an American attitude, Reynolda House has on display paintings by some of the best early American portraiture artists. Portraits by Gilbert Stuart and John Singleton Copley reflect the utilitarian society of early America. These artists strove to give American character to portraits while still retaining the sophistication of European art. The result is the depiction of simple characters in American atmospheres but painted with the same precision and detail as seen in the British portraits of the time. Attempts at Americanization of art foreshadowed the movement of the Hudson River artists to paint only American scenery.

After the idea of American art representing America became a dominant force in the Hudson River School, the desire for a nationalistic artistic spirit gained momentum in all of the later movements. The more recent Reynolda house paintings capture the same national pride of Cole and his contemporaries, but this spirit is put into the historical



framework in which each artist painted, producing a revolution of American attitudes in painting.

George Inness' *The Storm* (1885) and *Portrait of A. W. Lee* (1905) by Thomas Eakins show a movement toward a deeper exploration of the psychological potential of the landscape and portrait genres. In this sense, the paintings themselves take on nuances of mood, rather than having the emotional impact of the painting rest with the viewers reception of it.

By the turn of the century, the world had become more accessible to the American people, and opportunities to become familiar with European culture were available. The spirit of internationalism invaded America and artists were again influenced by European styles, especially French impressionism. Even though no American painter was an impressionist in the strict sense of the term, "American impressionism" brought new colors and light to the American art scene. William Merritt Chase's *Dorothy Chase In the Studio* (1905) as well as works by Mary Cassatt and Childe Hassam represent this movement in the Reynolda House collection.

During and after World War I, internationalism lost its popularity in the United States. Internationalism was replaced by national regionalism, and artists such as Thomas Hart Benton in painting and William Faulkner in literature depicted their native regions in a manner that dispelled the old idealistic vision of America as a land of justice and democracy. Benton's *The Bootleggers* (1927) at Reynolda House presents a distorted panorama of characters and objects reflecting the characteristic attitudes of "the roarin' twenties." The Depression of the thirties and World War II stirred artists even more to use their work as a medium for social and political criticism. Jack Levine, Ben Shahn, and Robert Gwalthmey are among these "social realists" whose works are exhibited at Reynolda House. Levine's *The Visit From The Second World* (1974) is a horrific display of character and symbol representative of the modern world.

*For Internal Use Only*, painted in 1945 by Stuart Davis, represents, for Reynolda House and for American art, a turning point between the somber themes of the war years and the intensification of color and tempo characteristic of post-war art. It captures in geometric abstraction both the still-life characteristics of earlier art and the energy that would possess the paintings of later schools. For this reason, it is considered one of the best paintings of the 1940's.

In the years since World War II, many different styles of painting reflect the increasing ambiguities in the American way of life. The yearning for the American spirit to return to a simpler lifestyle can be seen in the work of Andrew Wyeth. Artists like Frank Stella and Alexander Calder, the inventor of the mobile, use geometric figures to show a search for order in today's world and the influence of the machine age on culture. The images of Charles Burchfield vibrate with the energy of contemporary America. Audrey Flack's bold, shiny colors and super-real images bring to mind the plasticity of the day. Romare Bearden, using collage as a medium, presents a mixture of bright and dark shades to portray the African Black experience.

In 1976 a collection of contemporary American prints was

added to the collection. These prints made possible the representation of artists of the seventies whose work had not previously been exhibited at Reynolda House. Lithographs and etchings of the works of many of today's Pop artists complement the decor of the basement which, with its streamlining and bold use of color, seems more modern than the rest of the house. Prints by artists such as Josef Albers, Jasper Johns, Jim Dine, Roy Lichtenstein, Mary Frank, and Claes Oldenburg employ images such as spoons, arrows, words, hearts, vegetables, and enlarged comic strips to portray the ambiguities of modern culture.

The Reynolda House art collection is a successful attempt to show that even though the subjects and styles of Thomas Cole and Audrey Flack differ immensely, the spirit that motivated the pioneer artists one hundred years ago has been reborn in our time. Moreover, an exploration of the art and its motives from that time to the present is a means of understanding ourselves and our heritage.

Nevertheless, the exploration of art at Reynolda House is incomplete if the study does not include the house itself. The art collection is housed in the artistic creation of architect Charles Barton Keen. Completed in 1917, the house is a product of the trend of American manor houses built between 1910 and 1929. But even though it reflects the lavish 1920's, it is also an indication of the comfortable lifestyle of the Reynolds family. Low ceilings and multiple windows make the house seem smaller and more homey than its 100 rooms. The house was called "the bungalow" by the Reynolds family and is best described by Brendan Gill:

Reynolda House marks an unprecedented development in American domestic architecture... This structure, completed in 1917, is perhaps the first of an entirely new genre — a house on a grand scale that yet assumes an exterior almost as modest as that of a bungalow. We are not in the presence of wealth made formidably manifest, according to the practice of earlier generations... the intention here is plainly not to show off but to be happy among friends — a pleasing novelty in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Yet the coziness of the Reynolds mansion does not diminish the magnificent craftsmanship throughout the house. The ironwork, the ceramic tiling, and the intricate woodwork in the ceilings and mantelpieces complement the beauty of the house already manifest in the architecture.

Like the house, the furnishings, all originally used by the Reynolds, reflect the elegant but comfortable tastes of the family. An Aeolian organ is only one beautiful piece in the extant collection of antiques. Moreover, the attic of Reynolda House serves as a permanent exhibition space for a collection of clothing worn by the Reynolds family, displaying early twentieth century trends in American fashion.

The Reynolds House and the art collection provide the framework for the discovery of American art in all its forms. The living room often becomes the stage for theatrical and



musical productions or the setting for poetry readings and arts seminars. Reynolda House provides an atmosphere for arts discovery in enrichment programs for all ages. Every summer Reynolda House and Wake Forest University conduct an American Foundations Interdisciplinary course in which students learn American history through the exploration of different art forms. In this seminar a student may be exposed to Benton's *The Bootleggers*, "Rhapsody In Blue" by George Gershwin, and the literature of F. Scott Fitzgerald simultaneously in order that he may feel the emotion of the time that is captured in this art.

History is manifest for anyone who wants to discover it at Reynolda House. In visual art it may be found in the works of Gilbert Stuart, Thomas Cole, Thomas Hart Benton, Stuart Davis and Jasper Johns, and many others. In architecture, Charles Barton Keen gives "the bungalow" a subtle austerity. In music and literature, Barbara Babcock Millhouse, Nicholas Bragg, and the friends of Reynolda House provide numerous concerts and seminars open to anyone who would like to learn through art and its history. Discover the Reynolda House experience.

*by Judith Hiott*

Thanks go to:

Nicholas Bragg, Theodora Drozdowski, Barbara Babcock Millhouse, and Emily Wilson for providing information and insight needed to produce this article.



M. Raye Shornaker

## The Last of an Ellis Island Generation

She is an ancient tree  
Whose limbs are knotted and gnarled,  
Whose branches bear the fruit of many seasons,  
Whose roots reach to the ocean.

She is the touch of a frail and delicate leaf;  
Cool, shaky, quavering,  
Clinging to *her* tree.

She is the sound of songs already sung,  
Of words which chime the tunes of an aged calling.

She is the scent of cedar and mahogany and all that is preserved.  
She is the essence of life itself.

*by Pandora Passin*



Bill Dumas

## MARCHE FUNÈBRE

All Paris' steeple bells  
Toll hauntingly a eulogy:  
The tragic final coda  
To Polonaise and Fantaisie.

The mourned one's aching soul  
Is free to wander Polish lands;  
His harmonies to sing,  
Unhampered by his fragile hands.

His work still sings of love  
And hopeless dreams and ivory keys  
And Poland's broken spirit  
And rainbow-chases overseas.

Although its maker's gone,  
The music of his soul still chants  
Revolutionary Études,  
Which sing aloud: *Bonne nuit, doux Prince.*

by Jeannette Sorrell



Bird Fagg





David Evans

# Mundo

by David K. Evans

Mundo sat on a big flat rock in the morning sun and pelted little pieces of coral into the sea. Mundo was nine. He was also hungry. It was a little before seven and there had been nothing to eat on the hill that morning.

School didn't start until eight. Mundo had not decided yet if he would go to school today. His slate and copybook were in the wrinkled paper bag by his side. He might go to school. If he did maybe one of his brothers would be there. They might have gotten something to eat from Miss Clarie. She sometimes fed blacks if she wasn't in one of her bad moods.

Mundo's dark skin was caked in layers of fine white dust. He had not been in the sea for three days. Small bits of dried bush were tangled in his kinky hair. He had brushed it out with his hand that morning when he woke. It did no good. He could never get it all out, and he didn't really care anyway. It fell from the thatch roof of his mother's trash house. The house was old. It had two rooms. The kitchen was a clay oven outside under a thatch shed. The walls of the house were made of brittle and dusty wild cane, and were papered with faded pictures from magazines his father had sent out from New Orleans long ago. Mundo thought it was the ugliest trash house on the hill, maybe even on the whole island of Roatán.

He had not seen his father for a long time. His mother said his father was off working on the *Bahama Star*, and that when he came back he was going to build a yellow lumber house. Mundo didn't believe it. He didn't believe he was ever coming back. He didn't care anymore. He had cared when he was small, especially at Christmas, but not anymore.

Two gillumbo, with their bright green and red fins, swam silently through the reef near Mundo's rock. He watched them for a moment. They ate all the time. He thought they were probably never very hungry. He frowned and pelted a small piece of conch shell. Plop! They darted apart. The bit of shell sank, twisting slowly to the sandy bottom. The fish came together again, eyed the sinking shell, and slowly swam out of sight into deeper blue.

The sun was hot. The glare from the sea made Mundo's eyes ache. He reached for his paper bag and started slowly down the road, away from the school house. His brothers wouldn't be there anyway, and even if they were they probably wouldn't give him anything to eat. Besides, if he went to school he would get into another fight with the white boys. As he walked down the road he tried to step in the cool patches of grass along the side and not on the hot sand.

The *Mary-B* came into the harbor at eight thirty. Mundo was sitting on a fuel drum on Captain Myrl's wharf when she docked. She was a small white boat, trimmed in blue, with an old Lathrop diesel. She carried freight, passengers, and mail to and from La Ceiba on the mainland. Mundo dodged behind the drum until old man Carter made another boy back the heavy mail sack up the road to the post office. The old man never handled it himself. And he never paid any of the boys for backing it for him. They all hated him, but they never refused to back his mail. He would yell at them, and their mothers later would beat them for it. Mr. Carter was a white man.

Mundo waited to see if the passengers would have luggage. Sometimes they did and would give him something for backing it up the road for them. The only passenger was a Utila man. Mundo could tell a Utila man by his eyes. Folks said that people from that island had narrow "China" eyes. The man had a greasy "Salva Vida" beer box. It was tied with a piece of grass rope laced together to form a handle. Mundo made a leap for the box as it touched the wharf, but was jolted aside by his cousin Blinky. Blinky was eleven and stronger than Mundo. "Back it fo' ya, Mista?" Blinky asked, smiling up at the Utila man. The man was looking up the road, squinting into the sun, and didn't answer right away. Mundo hoped he would say no, but he fumbled in the pocket of his wrinkled khakis and gave Blinky a coin. "Leave it at Mr. Dudley's store. Tell th' woman Mr. Cooper tends to fetch it this morning a'fore noon." Blinky hurried off the wharf with the box on his head. Mundo hated him.

The next man off the boat was a white man, but he was not a passenger. It was Mr. Hector. He worked on the deck. He was always drunk or sick and never carried baggage. Mundo watched him stagger across the dock and sit down on a pile of empty crocus sacks. He dropped his head into his hands and was still.

"Hey, you boy!"

Mundo looked up and saw Henry holding a red bicycle in his two huge hands. Henry was the engineer on the *Mary-B*. He was the biggest black man Mundo knew. He had a voice to match his size. Bending over the rail he lowered the bicycle gently to the uneven, sun-bleached grey boards of the wharf.

"Roll dis'er bike up to Mista Louie's place. Maybe he'll gif yasomething. Dont' cha try ride n'er now, ya hear? Roll'er!"

Mundo delivered the bicycle. Mr. Louie wasn't at home. Mundo found him patching the keel on a motor dory under Mr. Olson's water house. Mundo squatted against one of the posts in the shade. He mumbled something. Mr. Louie stopped sawing and laid the saw across the dory's green bottom. He was a short, white man. He had a limp in one of his legs. Mundo could never tell which leg he limped on. Mr. Louie didn't like blacks. They made him edgy, somehow, almost as if he were embarrassed or something.

"Ya gotta speak up louder dan dat, boy, if ya want me to hear what'cha gotta say," he said.

"Mista Henry say must bring yo bicycle to ya," Mundo said.

"Well, mon, where is she? Did Henry get'er fixed in Ceiba? What'cha do wif'er? Leave'er off by th' house?"

"Yes suh. Left'er wif Miz Doris, suh."

Mr. Louie frowned at the boy for a moment. He squatted down, closed one eye under a bushy grey eyebrow, and sighted over the new keel. He picked up a battered plane, ran his thumb over the nicked blade, and frowned at the boy again.

"What'cha hanging 'round me fo?"

Mundo said nothing.

"Miz Doris give ya anything?"

"No suh."

"Go tell 'er I says to give ya something. Well, go on, get th' hell away from here," Mr. Louie said. He started slowly planing the new keel, stooping now and then to sight along the top.

Miss Doris was in the yard, inside the wild cane chicken coop. She did not see Mundo standing there by the gate, his head down, skinny arms behind his back, making circles in the dirt with his big toe. She backed out of the coop and into the boy. It frightened them both.

"What'cha doing standing here? What'cha want, boy?"

Mundo mumbled something, his head still down.

"What'at? Talk up, boy. Look up here when ya talks ta me."

"I says dat Mista Louie says must gif me som'ting, mum."

"Oh I must, must I. What fo? Th' bicycle?"

"Yes'um."

"What he say?"

"Didn't say, mum," Mundo said, dropping his head again.

Miss Doris put her hands on her hips and frowned at the boy.

"Well, how much ya want?"

Mundo mumbled at the dirt and his big toe again.

"Ya come on now! I ain't got all th' morning to waste trying ta get yo to speak up. Look up here, I done said, when yo talks ta me."

"I says I don't want nothing but sum'ting ta eat," Mundo mumbled, louder this time, with his head up but his eyes shut tight.

"Din'cha have nothing ta eat on the hill this morning," she asked, frowning, her hands still on her hips.

Mundo hated her. She always asked that. They all did. They just wanted to hear him say it.

"No'um." He opened his eyes and stared up at her.

Miss Doris looked at the boy for a moment.

"Come here den," she said. Mundo followed her to the back steps. He sat down and waited while she vanished into the kitchen. The sun was hot. Sweat began to disturb the dust on his skin. He bent over and began picking at a scab on his skin. After a while Miss Doris put a bucket of water on the top step. She handed him a tin soup can. It was empty. She shoved him a cracked plastic plate with flowers around its edge. On the plate was a piece of corn cake, a boiled banana, and some red beans. The beans were hot. Miss Doris had been boiling them for Mr. Louie's noon meal. Mundo dipped the tin can into the water bucket. He took his reward over under an almond tree, squatted down, picked a long, grey hair out of the beans, and began eating with his fingers. She had not given him a fork. Miss Doris stood for a moment in the doorway looking at the boy, then turned and walked

into the kitchen out of sight.

"Ya just can't change um none. They live like animals up on that hill," Mundo heard her say to someone inside the house. He guessed it was old Miz Maude, Mr. Louie's mother. He listened for an answer. He heard nothing but the scraping of pans. Mundo hated them. He hated them all. They didn't even know he hated them. He finished the food and laid the plate and can on the steps and walked away, back down the road toward the wharf. He was crying, the tears etching little streaks in the dust on his face. He wiped them away, and stooping he picked up a small chunk of finger coral and pelted it hard at a skinny dog sleeping in the shade of a water tank.





Julia Drake

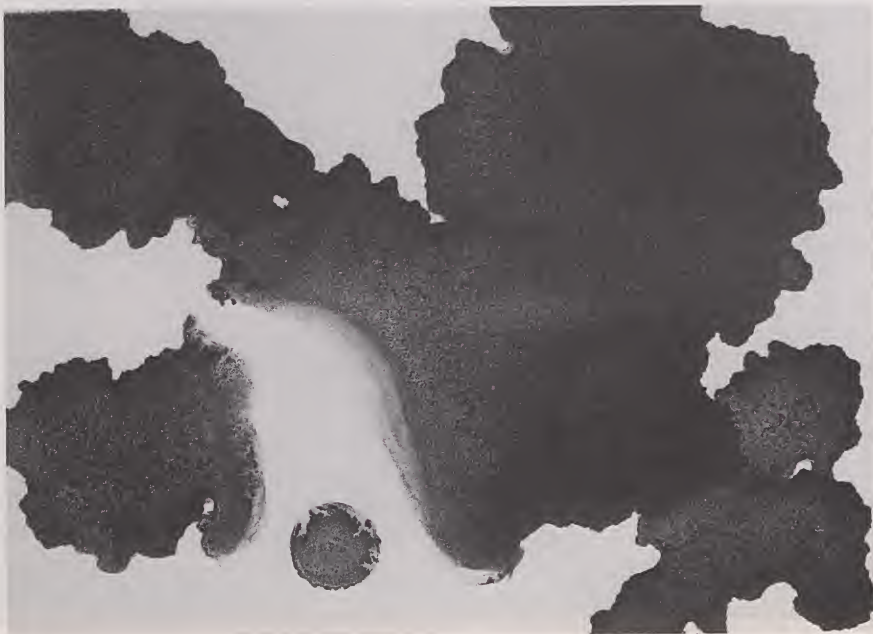
## Fat Dancer

Down in front, she's  
Up in front, she's  
Up and down fat dancer.  
There really ain't no  
Rock and roll, and  
Very little Wave, but  
Lay it down,  
There's lots of sound  
For up and down  
Fat Dancer.

Why so lone-ly  
Lit-tle round one  
Danc-ing by your-self?  
All a-long the  
Sides they're watch-ing . . .

(onetwothreefour) She's  
Up in front, she's  
Down in front, she's  
Up and down  
Fat Dancer.

*by John Marshal*



Pam Schroeder



## HEALING

The white oak is balding.  
Out the window, leaves  
Are random and sprinkling  
Like confetti. How raw,  
The cold morning light in steam.  
The light sparkles in pools,  
In smears across the tile.  
Blood unravels in bath-water,  
Pulled from my foot  
Like a magician's scarf.  
I soak the whole morning, skin tingling  
In the white braille of scars.  
I doze in the softer light,  
A drip of water whispering  
The pieces together.

*by Timothy Blanc*

Brad Fagg





Brent Ambrose

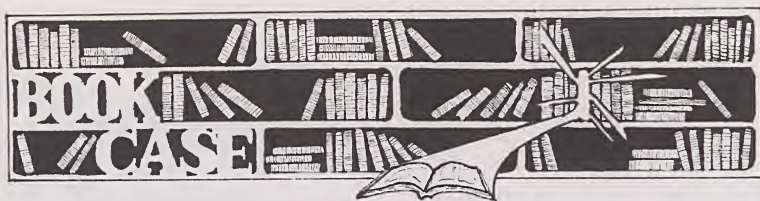
## Sunset, not Rembrandt

Sunset sighs  
every possibility  
of chiaroscuro.  
Sunrise cries  
each line  
awake.

*by Dennis Manning*



Paul Diodati



## NEWS FROM THE GLACIER

By John Haines

157 pp. Middletown, Conn.

Wesleyan University Press \$8.75

John Haines' latest book, *News from the Glacier*, is a collection of poems written between the years 1960 and 1980. For the most part, the setting is Alaska with a few pieces set in California and Montana. He is a poet of the Northwest: a poet of nature, time, and instinct. Beautifully done, these works reveal a mind that has a great understanding of man's primitive self, of his unspoken urges rather than calculated reasoning. Haines makes an intimate connection between nature and human kind. He has stripped man back to his primal self, one on one, one in one with the wild. And in doing so, he reminds us that everything living on earth, human and nonhuman alike, is generated from the same seed: the seed of life.

The poetic devices Haines uses are very effective. He does not use overblown metaphors but rather states his thoughts in a clear way, using imagery that is a part of our common experience. His poetry can be appreciated for its "surface appearance," for that is what sparks the reader's interest and draws him into the deeper layers of the poet's inner thoughts. In Haines' case, this surface appearance is the flowing beauty he creates with his pen. His lines glide with images of whiteness and darkness, the scent of the land, the silence of isolation, the vastness of the countryside, the solitary existence of each individual, the ghosts which haunt our minds, and the continuous eternal cycle of the seasons.

To Haines, everything that lives is related to each other in some way. Man is embedded in the seasons and he changes along with them. His thoughts close into himself just as the darkness of the winter closes into the northern wilderness. "Listening in October" is one such example of this seasonal introspection.

In the quiet house  
a lamp is burning  
where the book of autumn  
lies open on a table.

There is tea with milk  
in heavy mugs,  
brown raisin cake, and thoughts

that stir the heart  
with the promises of death.

We sit without words,  
gazing past the limit  
of fire into the towering  
darkness. . . .

There are silences so deep  
you can hear the journeys of the soul,  
enormous footsteps  
downward in a freezing earth.

This excerpt contains many of the elements characteristic in Haines' poetry: Darkness, death, the seasons, silence, and personal introspection. He also reinforces the idea of mankind and nature uniting as one by equating autumn to a book in the second stanza and calling man's soul back to the earth in the last stanza.

From this idea of unity, Haines goes on to discuss his theory of duality present in mankind. In "Divided, the Man is Dreaming," the author presents the human drive to hunt versus the desire for peace.

One half  
lives in sunlight; he is  
the hunter and calls  
the beasts of the field  
about him.  
Bathed in sweat and tumult  
he slakes and kills,  
eats meat  
and knows blood.

His other half  
lies in shadow  
and longs for stillness,  
a corner of the evening  
where birds rest from flight:  
cool grass grows at his feet,  
dark mice feed from his hands.

Aside from the word "man" in the title and the reference to hands in the last line, one could apply this poem to the animal kingdom as well as to mankind. For in any primitive attempt to survive, there is always the experience with beast, meat, and blood. Yet the point Haines is trying to make is that men are still basically animals, regardless of the advancements that have been made in civilization, and they therefore tend to unconsciously rely on instinct rather than intelligence.

While Haines is an admirer of beauty and wildlife, one



cannot say he is an optimist. His images are leaden with darkness, coldness, the depths of silence and spirit. His works beginning in the book's second section take on an even more ominous tone. The events happening in society seem to have disillusioned him in his isolated life. There are references to the Vietnam War, the tumult of the 1960's, and the destruction of civilization; he even makes references to those products of mankind, such as cars, gasoline, iron, and guns. When he does write in naturalistic terms in later sections, he refers frequently to smoke, dust and dryness. One such poem reflecting this skepticism is his "Dürer's Vision."

The country is not named,  
but it looks like home.

A scarred pasture,  
thick columns of rain,  
or smoke...

A dark, inverted mushroom  
growing from the sky  
into the earth.

This short poem is perhaps a culmination of his earlier premonitions of death, as was seen in the second stanza of "Listening in October" and which may be seen in other works as well. Haines seems to sense a sudden catastrophic elimination of life, one which could very well occur in the twentieth century.

In reading *News from the Glacier*, one has a sensation of depth and intensity. Haines comes across as a brooder, a man who can worry a great deal without losing his fascination and appreciation for life. He is a poet who marvels in a small burrowing animal while maintaining a multi-layered philosophy of existence. Ultimately, Haines possesses those qualities that are so important in a poet: the ability to sense what is around him, what is in him, and what is in others.

by Pandora Passin

## AUNT JULIA AND THE SCRIPTWRITER

By Mario Vargas Llosa

374 pp. Farrar Strauss Giroux  
\$14.95

In *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*, Mario Vargas Llosa recalls in a series of humorous episodes how he, as a teenager, fell in love with his 32 year old aunt. The author's account of their relationship comes across as funny not because of the predictable differences between himself and his aunt, but through the skillful way Vargas Llosa portrays the minor characters and his descriptions of the problems these

people present for the two lovers.

At the age of 18, the young Vargas Llosa works as head news-writer in a tiny radio station in Peru, and one of the most successful minor characters is the subordinate news-writer, Pascual, whose sadistic tendencies lead him to ignore relevant news in favor of stories of obscure disasters that may be weeks old.

Unfortunately Vargas Llosa fails to develop the two main characters adequately. While the relationship he describes is potentially a good subject for a novel, the personalities of young Mario and his aunt remain one dimensional throughout the book, and this flatness inhibits the development of the entire plot. If the author's sense of humor falters it is because the shallowness of the story itself becomes tiresome.

However, through some lengthy asides in these autobiographical chapters the reader learns of a truly intriguing figure: Pedro Camacho, a Bolivian scriptwriter whom the radio station has imported, hoping that his fame for writing soapoperas will attract new listeners. Vargas Llosa first meets Camacho when he enters the radio station office and announces his intention of stealing a typewriter. Without further ado the tiny man begins to wrestle with an ancient Remington that one suspects is heavier than he is. The author describes Camacho as having an unredeemable physical appearance and no sense of humor:

He might have been anywhere between 30 and 50, with oily black shoulder-length hair. His bearing, his movements, his expression appeared to be the absolute contrary of the natural and spontaneous, immediately mindful of the articulated doll.

After this the reader sees little of Camacho himself, but through the narrator we learn that he has a score of idiosyncrasies, ranging from a passion for Verbena mint tea to an obsessive hatred of Argentinians. By interspersing the autobiographical chapters with episodes from a number of Camacho's scripts, Vargas Llosa allows the reader to notice for himself how Camacho's eccentricities express themselves in his work. The first few scripts are quite well written, with effectively shocking endings and subtle slurs on Argentina that provide some of the most amusing passages of the book. Camacho's first character is a picture of calculated sanity: "a famous physician of the city, Dr. Alberto Quinteros — broad forehead, aquiline nose, penetrating gaze, the very soul of rectitude and goodness."

Each of Camacho's subsequent episodes introduces a new protagonist, and while all of them have the same "broad forehead, aquiline nose and penetrating gaze" that characterized Dr. Quinteros, they lack his moral fortitude. Each of these characters has his own obsession, and during the course of the book these become more and more perverse in nature. The quality of Camacho's writing in these episodes begins to decline, as the bizarre characters and events he creates reflect a dangerous change in his own state of mind.

The plots become so complex that listeners have difficulty distinguishing the characters from one another. Soon Camacho himself is unable to distinguish his characters, not

only from one another but from his own identity as well. His behavior at the station and the fragmented soap opera episodes provoke complaints from his employers, but the artist heeds neither protests nor suggestions. Eventually the writer brings all his characters to a series of disastrous ends and is left unable to function because of this.

This book's greatest potential lies in the tragic figure of Pedro Camacho. Through him the author presents the story of a traditionally shabby art form that controls and eventually destroys its creator, juxtaposed with a love story that is truly superficial. In doing so, Vargas Llosa plays around questions about art and human psychology which, if handled correctly, could have some resonance that would have raised this book above the level of a simple story retold. However, he ends with a disappointing digression that reinforces the trivial nature of his own story without further relating it to the figure of Camacho. One expects not some pat ending or philosophical discussion, but just that some of the fine allusions and comparisons which have been suggested throughout the book might be borne out by its conclusion.

by Nell Anders

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## THE SECOND AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND OTHER ESSAYS

By Gore Vidal

278 pp. New York:

Random House Inc. \$15.00

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Gore Vidal's *The Second American Revolution* is much like a marble cake, having different layers but generally the same quality of taste throughout. Vidal prepares his pieces expertly, sticking to the original recipe for the most part, while still adding his own bit of flavor in the end.

The series of nineteen essays has no structured center-point: it ranges from observations about Teddy Roosevelt to discourses upon Frank Baum's Oz books to a discussion of movie-making and still remains a simple collection of subjects in which Vidal is interested. The essays do, however, concern things relative to public knowledge. To a great extent, the reader's enjoyment is derived from pitting his ideas, notions, and knowledge against the author's evidence upon a certain subject familiar to both.

Vidal presents his material as a true historian and a thorough researcher. Whatever the subject, he knows his facts and has researched them, provided extensive background, and finally, presented them in such a clear and efficient manner that one is hardly prepared to doubt anything he says.

In "F. Scott Fitzgerald's Case," Vidal provides an insight to the man who, as a failure, was a kind of symbolic hero to

himself and, though misunderstood as a tragic figure, still continues to fascinate English departments and scholars. Vidal tells the reader who Fitzgerald was by reviewing Fitzgerald's own comments, works, and personal relationships. Then Vidal provides an analysis of the work of earlier Fitzgerald biographers in order to arrive at his own conclusions about the man. He is exciting, but why? He had a dream, but where was it? Vidal's answer is that Fitzgerald the man has become lost, and that Fitzgerald the myth is what eager-to-analyze scholars have left to society's fascination and confusion.

Vidal's allusions to other works and evocations of certain thoughts prominent to the American conscience is perhaps best in "The Second American Revolution." Skillfully using the Constitution and analyzing the political system of the United States, he takes the reader on a journey through the American past, revealing certain faults in the governing procedure and evident deviations from the Constitution as first presented. Vidal describes the evolution of American politics through three Constitutions, and subsequently, three republics: the First Constitution - 1787; the Second Constitution - 1793 (the addition of the Bill of Rights), and the Third Constitution - 1865 (the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth amendments). What he sees now is an American political institution in stagnation, little resembling the original idea of the founders. Vidal's answer? The Second American Revolution, dating from the passage of California's controversial Proposition Thirteen, which reduced by more than half the tax on real estate (and which Vidal likens to the Boston Tea Party - a forerunner of the first revolution). He calls for a new constitutional convention, under whose auspices (the Fourth Republic) a pure parliamentary system would prevail which would limit the power of the Supreme Court, uphold the authority of the House of Representatives as the supreme body, define the Senate's duties to the study of the laws of the House, eliminate the dictatorial presidency by dividing its powers, and, for the first time in two centuries, create real political parties as he defines them. This, in Vidal's mind, is the logical conclusion to the work done by the second constitutional convention and a needed change which all Americans should consider.

Vidal does his moralizing and presents his opinions, but with such great talent that his many diversified topics complement each other. His insights, though sometimes ravaging, are factually-based, and his personalities and description of events come alive for the reader. What he says about his material is not new, though it is perhaps entirely revealed for the first time. But what Vidal counts upon is reader involvement, and this is exactly what he gets. He transcends topics by relating ideas, and he sends the reader hurdling back through memory to trace a reference or an association that makes the discussion more meaningful. It is Vidal's own interest which he essentially wishes to convey, and like an eager young child, he seems to jest and say to the reader - "compare."

by Deryl Davis





Bucky Garrison



## Remember

*Augustan birth in Inigo's designs,  
Delivered at Whitehall — a neat level,  
in very stately Neoclassic lines,  
a banquet hall where gods can revel.  
Apotheosis of a Stuart gent,  
in oils of full blown rosy corpulence;  
a ceiling higher than the monument,  
and splayed by master Peter Paul Rubens.  
Look up into this holy Stuart rood,  
memento mori of a heavy climb,  
the echoes heard are those of heels on wood —  
the pensive steps of Charles transcend the time —  
he winds flights upward into the sky,  
then kneels, whispers 'Remember!' and waits to die.*

*by Dennis Manning*



# *The Student*



Frank Thomas

# *The Student*

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY • WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA • SPRING 1983



# The Student

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# Rêves de la Réalité

The first night of October. The banks of the Seine, illuminated by a full harvest moon. *Le Quai de Louvre* — an eternal moment that lingers like the misty Paris air. The internal reality of that moment is still vivid for me even in the foreign context of Wake Forest.

A willow branch sipping the surface of Lac Kir in Dijon like feathers suspended in crystal honey. Sheep grazing the hills of Normandy, silhouettes against the mythical monastery of Mont Saint-Michel. My experiences in the semester program with *l'Université de Dijon* recur in moments like dream scenes out of context. I find it frustrating to explain my year of study abroad; to understand it, one must experience it. I would rather not talk about it, but let last year live through me. Europe accelerated my growth beyond the limitations of formal education.

*Le Centre International d'Études Françaises* accepts students from all over the world. The program exposed me to various cultures, but ironically, we were isolated from the French students. To interact with the French, the foreigner must take the initiative and get involved in extra-curricular activities. The greatest mistake is isolating oneself in the comfort and security of a familiar culture. The Americans were most guilty of this "petty crime." Some remained so separated from the French culture that they returned to the States unenlightened, without insight or a greater understanding and appreciation of French society. All they can say is, "I've been there." France is not an exotic vacationland or escapist's paradise, but a part of the real world.

My goal: Total Immersion. The water has not yet dried from my feet, which have covered a lot of miles in the past few months. Of all the foreign programs, the organization of the *l'Université de Dijon* offers the student the greatest number of opportunities for interaction. It is the only one that integrates Wake Foresters with other foreign students. Only during a month of initial intensive French Studies were we limited to the group. From October to December, time seemed to accelerate. I encountered some fascinating native as well as foreign friends. *Le Centre* organized extra-curricular and cultural events, including weekend trips, cooking courses, soirées (evening performances and informal parties), and student participation shows. All sports and university facilities were open to us. We could join intramural teams and even compete against the French students. Ciné Club, Club Franco-Anglais, Theatre Universitaire, and Union d'Étudiants were just some of the possibilities. I "got into" these organizations, which were fantastic ways to meet people. The social and cultural life doesn't start rolling until late October, and by mid-December, I had just become friends with the students.

The CIEF (*Centre International d'Études Françaises*) offers a great variety of courses from elementary to advanced levels. Some interesting options: Gastronomy, Theatre, Impressionist and 20th Century Art, The Philosophy of Sartre, and Contemporary French Politics. My education extended the walls of the classroom, the confines of concrete. Formal education was not a priority. My study was an all-consuming one: a search for the true France. A book couldn't answer my questions; possibly a professor could have but these answers would have served only as reaffirmations to what I must live. So I entered my milieu. I became French.

Not an easy process. Initially, the Dijonnais French were suspicious, but welcomed me after finding me to be an eager learner. My ignorance was the major obstacle, but their patience and understanding encouraged me to continue the assimilation process. Luckily, a family related to a friend in Salamanca adopted me. I felt so much a part of the family that leaving it meant leaving home. But I said "au revoir," not "adieu." Most French people were surprised by my interest in "la vie française" because Americans are generally considered to be the most ethnocentric foreigners. Their impression is valid. The typical American tourists and students embarrassed me. However, the French evade the invaders by escaping to the coast or to other retreats. I was rarely considered a French woman by appearance, but many took me for a European. Getting closer. Eventually, the French adopted me into their society.

The Dijon Program is the only one which places students with families — "Français, bien sûr!" My family did not consider me a rarity, which was better than special treatment or ignoring me totally. They did not adopt me like the previous Dijonnais family, though I was their "pensionnaire," and they explained differences and corrected misunderstandings. I observed and absorbed. Actually, the Dijonnais lifestyle resembles that of suburban U.S.A. down to the microwaves, video games, Kellogg's Corn Flakes, and Levi's. And it was this desire for "The American Way" that most upset my romantic visions of France. The young garçon whistling through cobblestone streets with a warm aromatic baguette in the morning, the wrinkled and weathered old fisherman drawing in nets laden with tomorrow's meal, the accordionist squeezing out a song in a crowded smoky cafe, the postman, in bermudas and sandals, rambling down a country road on a rickety bike, the herbist vending her garden of time-tested remedies in the open market, . . . still exist, despite the American Invasion. I know because I met them. These people are France.

On the Normandy coast I met a poor farmer. Few words were spoken, but he invited me into his world: a rocky

meadow where a scattered group of sheep and cattle grazed, a tiny but immaculate garden perfectly arranged, a gray, slate-roofed cottage, and an anachronous Renault pick-up in the barn. Very simple, yet very rich. Every element was respected and cared for like a treasure. The farmer knew the land, the ocean that it emerged from, and the coastal mist that blurred their distinction. This man also knew that air and water were manifestations of the same element. Then I realized: the farmer was no different from me. How ridiculous to pretend to be someone I am not. Born American, I can never reverse my past. Our past did not matter. We simply became friends.

I find Home wherever I travel yet to realize this I had to discover the world for myself. Maybe some people never feel at home. Travelling is not for them. But for those excited about potential friendships, learning by living, and trusting the current to carry them wherever it flows, travelling is a growth experience.

For a short while, my mind, body, and soul functioned in the French mode. I immersed myself in Brel, Brassens, Piaf, Paul-Belle, flavored by Debussy, Massenet, Ravel, Satie... Colette, Sagan, Baudelaire, Ionesco, Molière... croissants, brie, brut, and wild mushrooms... Monet, Renoir, Matisse, Rodin, Cézanne... My tiny room overlooking the train tracks and gas plant seemed like a can of condensed *soupe de jour*. Walls, shelves, and floor were all filled with souvenirs. Rocks, wildflowers, and shells from every region of the country, posters, books, records, even French peanut butter. My transformation was such a subtle process that

others had to remind me of my "Frenchification." After returning to the States I suffered a mental block. Often, I could not express an idea in English that I could in French. In normal conversation, French words usually leaked out unintentionally. My sister surprised me when she told me that I spoke French even in my sleep. Luckily, she couldn't understand my unconsciously blurted-out secrets.

Just when I had reached the point of transformation, when the language, thoughts, feelings and new habits flowed naturally, when my friendships were strengthened, interaction and communication normalized, when the natives had integrated me into their society, just when I felt really French, the year ended. Now I know I must return for unfinished business. To lose all the progress gained in Spain, France, and the other West European countries I visited would be ludicrous. Now I want to tackle the world.

My last days in Dijon confused me. I hoped to hold on to that life and begin a new one at the same time. I remember the final performance of a Beckett play, when I had to rush off stage after the lights dimmed and the magic ended to stuff my suitcase and catch the 2:30 A.M. train. Passing from one life to another, I carried Dijon with me, and I still do.

The adventure begins here and now. Wanderlust may appear to be an escapist's disease, but for me, this journey is internal, as well as global. In discovering the world, I find myself in every person, and in every thing that I meet. This search reaffirms what the Normandy farmer taught me: we are all in this together. And we are on our way.

by Carole Anne Peters



Carole Anne Peters

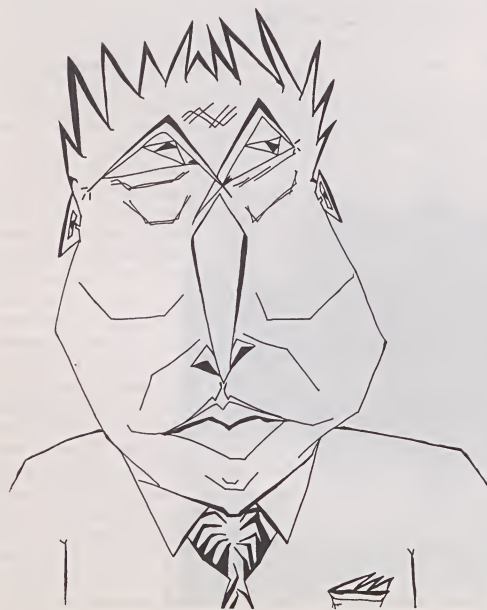
## *I Want To Be A Despot*

I want to be a despot  
Of benevolent regime.  
I want to be a despot  
And eat strawberries and cream.  
I'd ride on an expensive horse,  
Exploit my bourgeois working force,  
And be adored by all (of course)  
Those under my régime.

I want to be a slumlord  
Of the understanding kind.  
I want to be a slumlord  
Quite fraternally inclined.  
I'd eat with tenants, glad to share,  
And pat their children's filthy hair.  
They'd bow and scrape just everywhere,  
Because I'd be so kind.

I want to be the boss of  
A political machine.  
I want to be the boss of  
All the land that I can glean.  
I'd never rake up nasty muck  
Or help elect some bright-eyed schmuck.  
I'd count the best votes twice, for luck,  
And bless my sweet machine.

*by Alayna Keller*



Jed Straus



## Durante

El crepúsculo y el alba  
La tierra se funde con el cielo  
Fusión de polvo muerto y aire vivo  
En el nacimiento místico de enemigos  
jugando con la luz  
Sombras de cremesi extinguen los últimos  
Dedos del fuego  
Se rinden en la blancura  
Rociados por el velo del amanecer

No hay vencedor  
Cada uno reclama su territorio  
En el lienzo vacío  
El artista gradua los colores en matices mudas  
Y deja la obra abandonada  
Desconocida  
Anónima  
Se colora en moción continua

## While

Dusk within the Dawn  
Land merges with sky  
The fusion of dead dust and living air  
In mystical birth of enemies  
playing with Light  
Blood crimson shadows extinguish the last  
Fingers of fire  
Melt into bleach  
Moistened by a twilight veil

Neither wins  
Each claims territory on the  
Blank canvas  
The artist blends his colors into mute hues  
Leaves the work abandoned  
Unknown  
Anonymous  
Coloring itself in continual motion

When I was small,  
I watched the fire in the ghats\*  
From my window.  
Visualising the body  
Of some once-person  
All wrapped in a sheet  
Moistened with oil  
Like a salad.  
Then the man glinting fire  
Would light it.  
Where? — Certainly not the head,  
Probably the toes.  
The gush of fire  
Screams over the whole body,  
Agony searing the mourners.  
And my nostrils flicker trying to  
Smell the odour in my head.  
They tell me the head bursts —  
Does the blood splatter?  
Or does it clot before the shutter  
Shatters?

Now I am big  
And wonder what the soul feels  
Watching its material spouse ash —  
Or if it too shrivels up  
And dies.

— When I am dead  
I shall know.

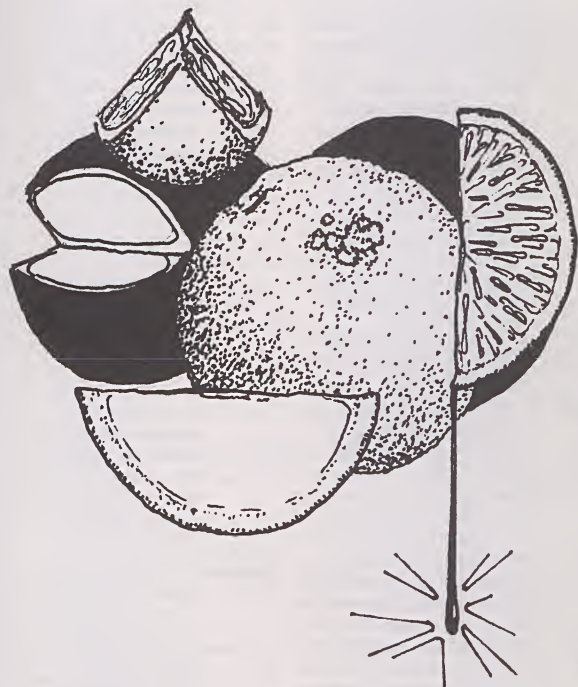
*by Mytrae Reddy*

*\*ghats — cremation grounds*

## Orange

Take this poem apart bit by bit, like an orange  
Eat its center, the core, the seeds, drain its juices  
Allow it to suffer  
Capture its intent, then  
Hurl it away, not realizing  
Each time you correct, revamp, refurbish  
Really, you are sending the poem down into the dirt, a cold seed.

Jeffrey W. Gjerde



Brad Fagg



# An Interview with Benjamin Barber: The Role of Art in Modern Society

By Pandora Passin

In March of 1983, Benjamin Barber presented the second lecture of the Tocqueville Forum entitled "Subversives, Seers and Suicides: The Artist in Liberal Society." Currently a professor of political science at Rutgers University, Barber has had an extensive education and maintains a broad range of interests.

Benjamin Barber was born in New York City in 1939. He was educated at Albert Schweitzer College, Grinnell College, London School of Economics and Political Science, and Harvard University. Barber received his PhD from Harvard in 1966. Not only has he taught at numerous institutions, including the University of Pennsylvania, Haverford College, and Essex University, he is also an author, playwright, editor and most recently, the librettist of a modern opera. His works include *Totalitarianism in Perspective: Three Views* (1969), *Superman and Common Men: Freedom, Anarchy and the Revolution* (1971), and *Liberating Feminism* (1975).

In addition to books, Benjamin Barber has written several plays and is a frequent contributor to major periodicals and scholarly journals. Since 1974, he has been the editor of *Political Theory: An International Journal of Political Philosophy*. During his visit to Wake Forest, Barber was interviewed by *The Student* and responded to questions dealing with the role of art and the nature of the artist in modern society.

**Student:** Are artists necessarily rebels? Can a true artist be a conformist or does conforming with the state cause the artist to lose his special function in society?

**Barber:** Well, conforming to the state is a problem for the artist because his function as an artist can only be carried out through a kind of spiritual subversion, which is to say the artist is a kind of permanent subversive, not in a political sense — he doesn't break laws, he doesn't assassinate leaders, but he does perceive the human condition differently than the common man or common woman, and in that sense brings a vision to society that it is subversive. If he is compelled to put his art at the service of society, he is in danger of corrupting it.

**Student:** Is suicide a greater likelihood for an artist in a liberal or dictatorial society?

**Barber:** The argument that I would make is that suicide is an extreme form of self-destructiveness. Now, on the one hand, artists are always, to some degree, self-destructive, self-lacerating, self-wounding, because the way in which they see the world, the distancing, the alienation of their own vision from the world has an alienating effect on them, and is a kind of wound. Now, in an oppressive society or a tyrannical society, much of the artistic energy is directed outwards, against the oppressive regime, against the oppressive society. The artist is so busy trying to present an alternative vision

to that society that he has little time for himself. In a liberal, permissive society where the artist can function free of censorship in a tolerant, pluralist climate, there is a much greater danger that he will turn on himself, not having anything external to react against, and will, in a sense, mutilate himself rather than oppose the society. There is considerable evidence for that, just in the numbers. To my knowledge, there are only a handful of suicides among artists in the Soviet Union, but among poets in the United States, for example, the suicide rate is outrageous: Sylvia Plath, John Barryman, Anne Sexton, Art Crane — the list goes on and on. So in a tolerant pluralist society like ours, the artist's energies are often directed inward against himself, and I would say that in an oppressive society the artist's creative energies are directed outwards.

**Student:** The modern ambiguous outlook as reflected in Theatre of the Absurd or contemporary classical music is a symptom of the societal condition. Has this modern conception of the self changed the manner in which politics is practiced?

**Barber:** There are connections between the way in which a society sees men and the way in which artists do their work. I

don't think it is a one-for-one connection. The nineteenth century was a rather harsh industrializing period of growth of mass society, and the response in art was Romanticism, which was a reaction against the society. So I don't think we want to necessarily assume that because in the twentieth century there is a somewhat ambivalent, uncertain view of human nature that artists necessarily have to represent the same ambivalence in their work. Nonetheless, clearly the lack of clarity with which people see themselves in society does infect the artist. The artist is a human being and shares the spirit of the times to some degree, and I think it's true that there is a great deal more ambivalence, uncertainty, and skepticism in both society and the arts in our century than there was in the eighteenth century or in the fourteenth century. A fine example would be fifth century Athens which experienced a period of great clarity while fourth century Athens, due to its defeat in the Peloponnesian war, experienced a period of much greater uncertainty. You can see that both in the character of political society, in the theatre, in the sculpture, and in the political philosophy of that time.

**Student:** Can the visual arts be said to influence the definition of justice when they are used in a political tool such as propaganda?

**Barber:** The arts as a generic, the Arts, with a capital "A" really don't exist. What exists is poetry, prose, plastic arts, fine arts, dance, drama, and we can't necessarily assume that the interaction of one of the arts with society or with justice is identical to the interaction of any other of the

arts. So, we might say that theatre has a profound effect on society and on its definitions of justice while music has no impact at all. Or we might reverse that and say, as some people do, that modern rock music has a profound corrupting influence on the society whereas modern theatre, as an entertainment, is irrelevant in this respect. I think your question rightly points to the fact that the arts are different from one another. They're created differently. Some are created collectively; some are created individually, and they're appreciated and apprehended differently as well. Poetry we read in private. Theatre we experience in public with our fellow citizens. So, when you then ask 'What about the visual arts?' that raises an interesting set of questions. The visual arts: sculpture, painting and so on are distinctive in several ways. First of all, they're art forms which don't depend on words — that's important. Poetry, prose, and theatre all begin with the word. We know that in the beginning there was the word, and art forms that have their source in the word are, I think, different in certain ways from art forms that don't, like music. Certainly, if you look at the history of the visual arts; if you look at the role Delacroix's painting played during and after the French Revolution and into the early period of French Romanticism; or if you look at the role that the Greek sculptors played in embodying the "Classical Ideal" in fifth century Athens, one sees that there is a connection with politics. However, my own controversial but nonetheless rather strongly held belief is that in certain ways the visual arts are probably the least political of the art forms, least

likely to affect the definition of justice, and the most likely to be seen as an independent aesthetic domain. This is not to say that the visual arts do not reflect back onto society, but it is to say that while Plato bans poets and certain forms of music from his Republic, to my knowledge he doesn't ban the painters and the sculptors. On the whole in oppressive societies, the visual arts are the last to be directly censored, the last to be seen as a threat to forms of justice. Again, the Puritans were concerned with music, dance, and theatre, and controlled all of them in their society; however, they were less concerned with visual arts. So, my sense is that the visual arts, of the several art forms, are the least likely to have a direct impact on a definition of justice.

**Student:** Is modern art dependent on economic corruption? And if so, does this dependence differ from that of art in the past?

**Barber:** Well, the artist has always been subject to money. The artist has to live, and he can only live with money, and generally speaking, art is a non-productive occupation which doesn't produce goods and services that can be consumed in a society. So, the artist has a problem and he's got two choices: he can sell himself (traditionally artists sold themselves to patrons), or he can sell his art. Both forms of sale are corrupting. If you sell yourself, you become, in a sense, a slave, you become dependent on the person for whom you're working; and if you sell your art it's even worse in a way, because you make your art a commodity, a medium of exchange, and that has a corrupting effect on the art itself. And yet what other choice is there, ex-



cept starvation? Starvation has a corrupting effect as well.

**Student:** How would you restructure the new type of television to serve as an integrative force in society?

**Barber:** Well, the most difficult obstacle that faces democracy in modern societies is the large scale character of these societies. Democracy is a form of government meant for small-scale, intimate face-to-face societies, and it was never really intended to be an appropriate form of government for a mass continental, urban, industrial civilization like our own.

The political problem that is raised, then, is whether there are artificial means of providing the kind of face-to-face interaction that traditionally has been required by democracy. Television provides a potential electronic means for providing the kind of face-to-face interaction that is otherwise impossible in a large, modern society.

One thinks of the possibility of what we might call "electronic town meetings." People of different locales across the nation could meet through the interactive capacity of television, and they could participate through a telephone line in discussions. One thinks of the possibilities of television as a form of communication that allows people in large societies to have somewhat more contact with each other than they otherwise would. The other function television plays in a democracy is that it becomes a surrogate for religion, for art — it becomes a source of common values, outlooks, and perspectives. A television program like "Roots" or "Holocaust" provides a kind of national outlook. The coverage of our national elections, of funerals

such as Kennedy's and Martin Luther King's; of the space shots, provides us with a national set of rituals. The use of television for national news, great events, even sports events, allows Americans to unite around certain common themes which without television would be very difficult for them to do. For a country as large as ours you could imagine the amount of fragmentation occurring without it. Television has become a kind of national fireplace, around which the nation can gather and warm itself.

**Student:** Satire can allow instruction through a distancing effect. If satire ultimately encourages despair, is there a middle ground at which the needs of instruction and entertainment can be fulfilled?

**Barber:** Well, there are about as many answers to that question as there are people who have thought about satire. At the extremes, you have people like Molière arguing that satire is didactic, instructional, uplifting. It teaches us the nature of vice, and in doing so it exposes the scoundrels in our society. Certainly, if you read *The Misanthrope* by Molière or some of Shakespeare's comedies or you read Aristophanes, there is a great deal of puncturing of overblown balloons. In that sense satire can seem to serve virtue by exposing vice. That's one end. At the other end you have critics who say "Nonsense!" In fact, though satire may expose vice, it never does anything whatsoever for virtue because it takes an utterly cynical view of the world. Generally, it exposes not the truly corrupt, but it exposes people who make a claim to be virtuous constantly showing them to be not virtuous. So, it becomes part of a cynical rejection of

the very possibility of virtue in the human world. It's based on a pessimism about the human character, assumes that human beings are out for themselves always, and the satirist's job is to prove that even though you seem to be altruists you are really only self-interested. At that end, then, you have the argument that satire is only going to have a corrupting effect on virtue. Between those two extremes probably lies something like the truth, although my own tendency is to believe that, on the whole, satire is more corrupting than useful to society. In a society already corrupt, satire can expose vice, while in a society aspiring to virtue, satire can make the quest for virtue look foolish.

**Student:** You have written "The art of politics and the art of drama look perforce beyond the cave for realities embedded in but not revealed by the mundane." It seems as if both politics and the arts tend to create an unreality. What are the realities which you believe politics provides? Can these ever be the same realities that art provides?

**Barber:** To put it in a too simple fashion but one which captures the difference one might say art, through the imagination, tries to serve the realities of the soul. The State, through the constitution, tries to serve the realities of the body. Now, that's true dualistically: the soul inhabits the body and morality tries to serve, to some extent, the soul. A distinction like this is useful because ultimately, politics wants to teach us and show us and help us to live well. Art wants to help us see well. There is a relationship between seeing and doing, but it's not direct. I think there is a



natural division between them, to the extent that the artist is able to offer us alternative visions while politics offers us a way of living, and when that divide is crossed, when the state tries to tell us how to imagine the world or the artist tries to tell us how to live in the world, there are considerable dangers for both the polity and for the artist.

**Student:** Have you ever found an answer to the question you posed in *Superman and Common Men*, "Why has anarchism been a movement of poets rather than first-order philosophers?"

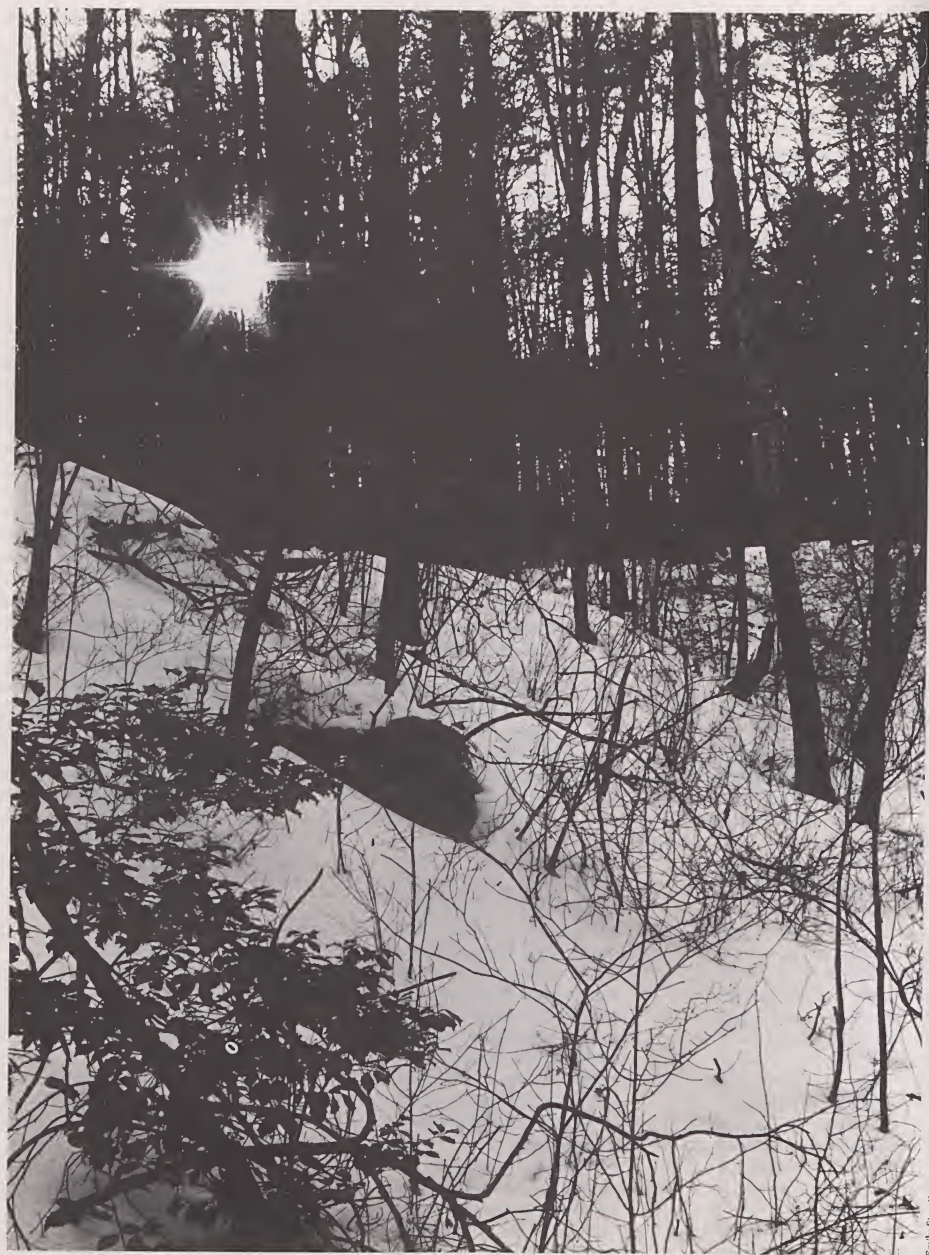
**Barber:** The answer I gave in the book I still accept. I think anarchism is a fundamentally incoherent, indefensible position on two grounds. The first is the most important. Human beings are born into a social world and bound already from the onset to one another. Thus the anarchists' assumption that human beings are solitary beings who can live alone, I think, is an absurdity. It's foolish. We're born into a whole set of social relationships, and the political problem is how to sort those out and make the relationships into which we

are born naturally accommodate themselves. To suggest, therefore, as the anarchist does, that human beings are born solitary with separate individual identities and the only political question is whether or not they are to associate themselves with one another is an absurdity from the political point of view. It appeals to the artist, because the artist is a creature of the absurd, a creature of the imagination. The artist fancies himself to be alone in the world by virtue of his alienating consciousness. So from the artist's point of view it's a perfect metaphor for the artistic condition: alienation, separation, solitude. And anarchism, the artist in revolt, the artist as a subversive, is a very effective metaphor for the artist's revolt, but it's utterly unsuited to the actual human condition of men and women who live in a social world and who can never escape but who can only try to make the necessary dependencies that exist within that world legitimate. In short, anarchism is an apt metaphor for the artistic condition and that's why artists are drawn to it. It's a lousy metaphor for the social

and political condition, which is why first-rate political philosophers have always rejected it.

**Student:** You have said that liberal culture dreams of a balance between justice, art, and politics but that normally these are in conflict. Politics traditionally defines the realm of morals. Is it possible for art in general to adequately perform the same task?

**Barber:** There are some artists who try. I would hazard to guess that the most dangerous thing the artist can do is try to become a moral legislator for society. It's dangerous because it corrupts his imagination and his art by bringing what is a quest for the impossible into the world of the possible, by bringing what should be an alternative vision into the world of actual vision, and by imposing on the actual world visions that are only meant for the imagination. And in that sense it is deeply corrupting to art but it's also dangerous to society because it raises the specter of the tyranny of the artistic imagination over the human life, and that tyranny is a very dangerous one.



Emily Street

## Blizzards

Nothing sounds in this place;  
Your hands pass across my shoulders  
and something shudders —

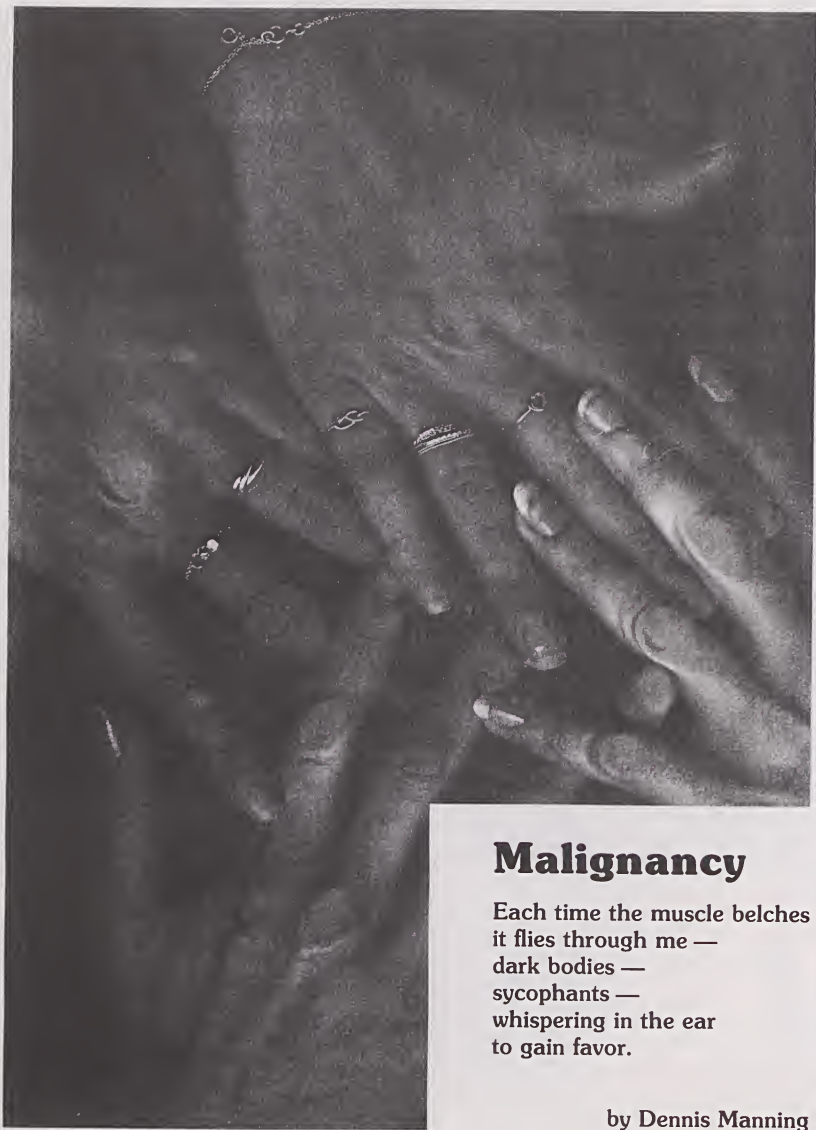
Sun turns the winter clouds to calico.  
Soon snow will fall here, bleached pepper  
Against the horizon; children misplaced  
beneath her, we listen.

In the frozen wind, your voice  
In slow bubbles comes clear,  
Glistening, then dies like visions,  
Each syllable  
Shattered  
Against this crust.

The senses cannot bear such stillness,  
Can as little know what lies  
Beneath it —  
The darkness, alive nights,  
How the demons dance and gain,  
Advance with tiger step  
To break this snowy silence.

*by Nell Anders*





Sean Williams

## Malignancy

Each time the muscle belches  
it flies through me —  
dark bodies —  
sycophants —  
whispering in the ear  
to gain favor.

by Dennis Manning

## Prisoned In A Dream

In my blue and red dream all my Christmas toys are dead soldiers.  
I march them through the hall, down the staircase. Two days later  
They mingle with my armymen, electric trains, and mandolin  
Back in the box. Stooping, listening to their plastic conversations,  
I fall in. I feel the large imprint of father's hand on my back and hide my eyes.  
The lid creaks shut like a coffin. I tell the soliders to stop stabbing  
Their bayonets. Unable to raise his weight atop the box, I close my eyes,  
Afraid of the dark, remembering my father grabbing the nape  
Of my neck and spanking me for crying. When my wrists slide out, probing,  
My eyes shoot through the keyhole. The Sergeant stands dressed like my father  
Lifting the lid with a knife behind his back.

Tumblers begin to click  
And bars push through, decayed. A huge rat runs across the floor, stirring  
The dirt like yesterday's soup. Dirty socks sweat into the open wounds  
Of the tortured. Limply they play their escape like canasta. Three by three,  
Sliding down the walls with their hands, they creep, together in one mad rush  
Flooding the fence. The chinks of barbed wire gives them away, and oceans  
Of light and lead tow them under. The dawn brings the silhouettes of men  
Hanging by their collars like yellowed vines, or the Colonel's laundry.  
Morning dust strums the wire, a silent pitch, a Mexican Cantada.

Jeffrey W. Gjerde

# AN UNUSUAL CASE

by Chris Garner

On the surface, at least, it did not look like a case out of the ordinary. A man had pushed another man from a third floor window in anger and the unfortunate victim had died of injuries resulting from the fall; the accused, a certain Samuels, was charged with murder in the second degree. There were a handful of eyewitnesses who were ready to testify in a court of law, under the power of an oath to God, that Samuels had indeed pushed the dead man from the window in question, and the police had gathered various other pieces of evidence which seemed to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that Samuels was indeed guilty. The accused, though he had not yet denied that he had actually committed the act to which the witnesses referred, insisted upon entering a plea of not guilty, and demanded a trial by jury. Further, he would act as his own attorney.

Needless to say, the trial brought out a handful of curious observers; however, the day's activity was routine as the prosecutor called several witnesses to testify, all of whom swore to God Almighty that Samuels had committed the act of which he was accused. Samuels, a stumpy man of about twenty-five with short, thick, grey-blond hair and identical beard; and eyes like those of a blind fish which lives miles underwater, sat expressionless throughout the testimony, but seemed tense; whether he was afraid or impatient one could not tell. He did not cross-examine anyone. The second day saw many homicide experts explaining the evidence which seemed to damn Samuels irrevocably; again, however, the accused seemed to take no interest in the proceedings, but was often seen craning his neck, looking over his shoulder toward the spectators in the courtroom, as if looking for someone.

On the third day, Samuels called his sole witness to the stand. Upon the announcement of the man's name, the prosecutor and his assistants looked puzzled and began to shuffle their papers, as they were unable to recall his involvement with the case. The mysterious witness, a tall, thin man in an ill-fitting suit, with wavy, greasy black hair and an air of resigned confidence which brought something to every observer's mind, though what they could not define, took his seat and swore to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help him God. Samuels stood up, squinted hard in the general direction of the witness stand, and then stepped out from behind his table, dragging his chair behind him. He planted the chair in front of the stand, pursed his lips, stood facing the jury box, and began his questioning.

"Please state your occupation."

The man said that he was an instructor in physics, though without stating at what institution or level.

Samuels turned to face him and leaned on the back of the chair with both hands. "What is this?"

"It's a chair," replied the witness.

"And what is it doing?"

"It's sitting there."

"Why?"

"Because the force of gravity keeps it there, and the property of inertia keeps it from moving until it's compelled to by a sufficient force."

Samuels smirked at the gentleman and continued. "So if I were to exert a sufficient force on this chair, which I'm now leaning on, what would you say would happen?"

The physicist answered without hesitation. "It would move in the direction in which that force was applied."

Samuels pushed the chair and it slid into the witness stand; he looked at it for a moment, gave the perplexed jury a knowing look, and walked back to the table at which he had sat, stone-faced, for the preceeding two days. He returned to his witness with a book which he held out in front of him with both hands, much as a supplicant might.

"That's a book," said the physics teacher, grown cocky with his successes during the first battery of questions. There was a modest titter throughout the courtroom. Samuels smirked again.

"So it is. Now, tell me, what would happen if I let go of this book?"

"It would fall to the floor," said the witness, understandably incredulous. The judge banged his gavel.

"Mr. Samuels, this irrelevant questioning has gone on far enough. . . ."

Samuels cut in, "If Your Honor will kindly suffer through a few more moments of this line of questioning, I feel certain you will understand the point." The judge was too bored to argue further, so he acquiesced.

"Thank you, Your Honor," said Samuels, and smirked his omnipresent smirk. He dropped the book. It fell to the floor. "Well, sir, it appears that you've been quite right in both your predictions today." No one laughed. Samuels went on, "Now tell the court how you knew these things were going to happen."

The witness gave a surprised little laugh and said, "Well, Mr. Samuels, those are simply elementary laws of physics.



Most of us learned them in the third or fourth grade." He laughed, but no one else did.

"Mm-hmm. And what are these laws, as you call them, based on?" Samuels squinted with a blind fish stare at the witness. "Why do you believe in them?"

"Because they're just commonsense," responded the flabbergasted physicist, "Everybody knows about the law of gravity."

"Oh, yes? Why?"

"Because... because you can see it, that's why."

Samuels paced about the courtroom for what seemed an interminable length of time, nodding, with his hands behind his back. Finally, just as the judge had opened his mouth to order him to resume questioning or open the floor to the prosecution, he turned back to the witness and pulled a half-dollar coin from his pocket.

"Suppose, sir, that I told you I was going to flip this coin, and I asked you to tell me which side would come up? What would you say?"

The physicist looked a little puzzled, and replied, "Well, I couldn't really predict, because there's a fifty-fifty chance that either side will come up."

"Uh-huh. Well, let's say that I'm going to do an experiment. Let's say that I'm going to flip this coin five hundred times." A pause. "Okay, I just did it. And you know what? Each and every time, the coin came up heads. I tossed five hundred heads in a row. Let's say that happened. What would you have to say about that?"

The witness looked hunted for a moment, then regained his composure and replied, "I'd say that that was a very improbable occurrence."

"But possible."

A pause. "Yes."

"What if," Samuels said, getting rather loud at this point, "I tossed this coin one million times, or one billion times, and every time, I tossed a head. What, then, would you say regarding this?"

"Mr. Samuels, I'm afraid that I don't see your point at all..."

"Just answer the question please." (It has been said that at this point the judge fell asleep. This story, however, is apocryphal.)

"Sigh... Well, Mr. Samuels, I'd say the same thing; a very improbable occurrence, incredibly improbable."

"But possible."

"Yes, possible."

Samuels grinned very unpleasantly, "So, then, you'd say that this would be a case where the evidence that anyone can see contradicts what you, and all of us, I suppose, considered the truth of the matter."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Well, if you had never heard of the law of probability, and you saw me toss a coin a billion times and get a head every time, then you might be inclined to say that when you toss a coin, you get a head." No response. "True enough?"

The physicist shook his head and looked down, emitting a little cough-like sound of incomprehension. "Mr. Samuels, I'm afraid I still can't understand what you're driving at..."

Samuels gave the man a look which most of the people present construed as a look of triumph, then turned obliquely to the courtroom at large. "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I propose to you that you might indeed, if you didn't know the truth, be inclined to draw the conclusion I just explained from the theoretical experiment and the imagined results I've put forth. However, for those of us who understand the laws of probability, through our reason, this idea that coin always comes up heads when it is tossed is patently ridiculous." He looked expectantly at the irritated and drowsy jury. "But, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I submit that we have been equally deceived by empirical evidence regarding other matters. Specifically..." He took the half-dollar, flipped it into the air, then spread his arms and let the coin fall to the floor, "... the law of gravity." The courtroom began to murmur; Samuels, whipped into a froth by his own eloquence, continued at greater volume and higher pitch, "I enter my plea of not guilty on the grounds that I had *no absolute knowledge* that the alleged victim of the crime of which I am accused and for which I am at this very moment standing trial would fall down, and I submit to you, and to your reason," (This last word he punctuated with an awkward and sideways stab into the air with his right arm) "that, indeed, there was an equal possibility that he would fall upward, or to one side, or at any possible angle. Thus, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I submit to you, as the undeniable truth, that my actions were not responsible for the death of this man, but," he finished with a shrug of his shoulders, his voice dropping several decibels in volume but rising about an octave in pitch, "the laws of chance."

Samuels was found guilty as charged and sentenced to twenty years in prison; however, a federal judge overturned the conviction when it was discovered, through a magazine interview with one of the members of the jury, that three of the jury members were convinced by Samuel's argument and entered decisions of not guilty, so embarrassing the dumbfounded majority with the possibility of a hung jury that those who were quite certain that Samuels was quite guilty, as well as quite insane, coerced the three dissenters into accepting whichever verdict was drawn from a hat containing slips of paper with each member's vote upon one.

## Upon First Hearing Keith Jarrett's *Köln Concert*

The first notes trickle down the scale  
And the room fades;  
Piano only remains.  
Chords barren, desolate, still  
Conjure  
Lonely city roads of snow leading to  
Day rising.  
People walk, gather, swarm to a  
Crescendo.  
Bells ring, the whiteness glistens and then dims.  
People begin to hurry home.  
The tempo slows as noise, city, life  
Decrescendo.  
Day fades  
To a black gothic steeple  
Silhouetted against  
Gray, still sky.  
Silence.  
Applause.

by KS

## RESONANCE

A Picassoblue  
Forest  
Reverberates  
Barefooted  
Nymphic  
Timesteps  
Shuffling  
Echos  
In tempo  
With the timbre  
Of encroaching  
Greenness.

*by Judith Hiott*



Mercedes Tealdo



### VICTOR

The well-adjusted man  
Watches his world  
Of timetables and terror,  
Of sirens and sermons.  
Watches  
Through an orange-tinted haze  
And smiles  
His psychopathic smile.  
Having conquered his environment.  
Having defeated his companions  
He has achieved  
Success.

### THE MARTYR

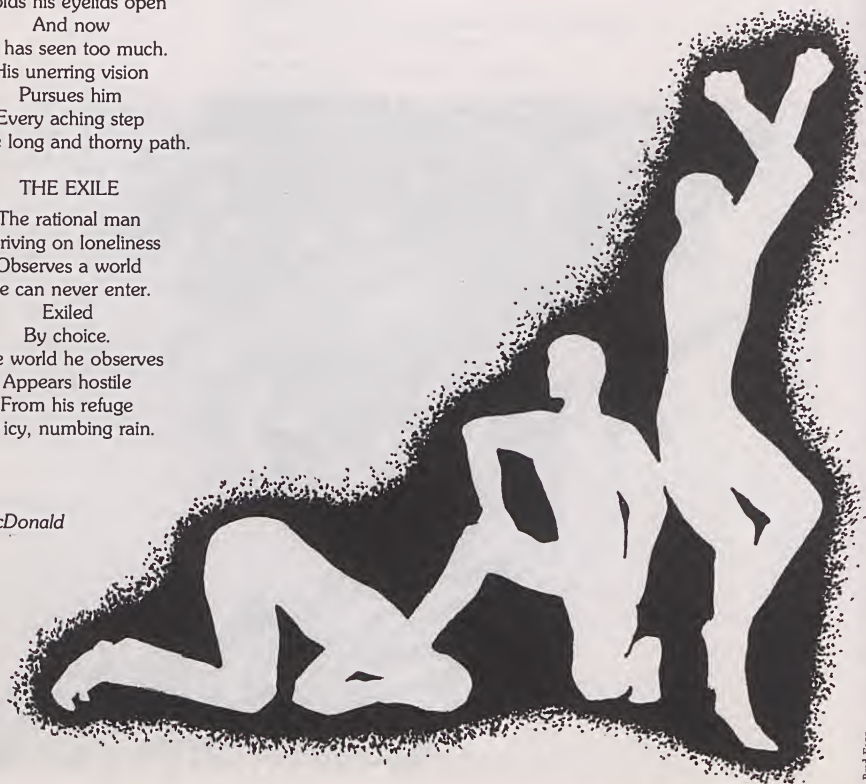
The troubled man  
Looks through weary eyes  
At a world Full of pain.  
A wisdom worse than fate  
Holds his eyelids open  
And now  
He has seen too much.  
His unerring vision  
Pursues him  
Every aching step  
Of the long and thorny path.

### THE EXILE

The rational man  
Thriving on loneliness  
Observes a world  
He can never enter.  
Exiled  
By choice.  
The world he observes  
Appears hostile  
From his refuge  
Of icy, numbing rain.

*by Hal McDonald*

## Reality: A Three Part Phenomenon



## Fast

Let me taste  
The fruit on display  
in sordid stalls  
At dusk.  
Ripe. Ready  
Hidden — the putrid dregs  
That shun the light of  
Night  
Knowing morning carries  
Death.  
Wooden boards slap shut  
Boxes safe from scavengers  
On their nocturnal prow.  
I am hungry  
But forbidden to touch  
Your rotten flesh  
Too ripe for a child's mouth  
Aged in stale air  
Ready to burst in toxic  
Flames of earth.

*by Carole Anne Peters*

## Consumation

Moments  
so rare and raw  
split open  
like ripe, fleshy fruit  
spilling its guts,  
exhaling  
softly naked.  
Spirits  
we share more  
than just a bottle,  
savoring the biting warmth  
nourished  
by a marrow soup  
in the cracking  
of youthful bones.

*by Amy Sue Hoey*

## Song for a Minstrel

### Eros

The streets all sing the song;  
Same and long, sad and wrong  
They moan the moon away.  
Night and day, work and play,  
As all God's children run  
High upon Satan's sun,  
They weigh upon the feet;  
Sad but sweet, no retreat  
For she who would but live  
Life to give. Do not grieve.  
For Eros walks alone.  
The streets provide no home.

### Thanatos

I have walked these streets by day  
And heard the song, and scene decay;  
The begging fingers, leprous toes.  
The doors, they open, then they close  
Just out of reach of those near death,  
Of those who breathe their dying breath  
A thousand times a day because  
There is no place to lie. I pause,  
Reflecting on, relentless song:  
The same, so long, how sad, how wrong. . .  
The Satan sun, it smiles in jest,  
For Thanatos, who finds no rest.  
The Reaper, silent, passes by:  
The steets afford no place to die.  
— *Dedicated to my friend, JHL.*

by Norris Smith





Emily Streett



## Dachau

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It is only shadows that move  
Toward stretchers, a German's boot  
Cut once, his heel  
Shaped a muddy U  
The wind and forty years  
Have not eroded.

Here a thousand minds returned to sleeping,  
To roses, morning cigarettes  
(rising away in strands).  
They fell, each face  
like ripe fruit  
Across these tiles.

At Dachau the skeletons stare  
Unredeemable, unashamed;  
This is the place where angels die  
On raw leather, their hearts toss,  
Wings shrivel black smoke  
To heaven.

There are no more saints, nor martyrs.  
Who knows burning, the soldier,  
The Jew, every one  
Remains.  
The angels we abandoned, bodies  
Sundered  
Where death flies  
Past memory.

*by Nell Anders*

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## Virgil's Ecloga IV

Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus!  
Non omnes arbusta iuvant humilesque myricae;  
Si canimus silvas, silvae sint Consule dignae.

Ultima Cumaei venit iam carminis aetas;  
Magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo.  
Iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna;  
Iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.  
Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum  
Desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,  
Casta, fave, Lucina: tuus iam regnat Apollo.  
Teque adeo decus hoc aevi, te Consule, inibit,  
Pollio, et incipient magni procedere menses;  
Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,  
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras.  
Ille deum vitam accipiet divisque videbit  
Permixtos heroas et ipse videbitur illis,  
Pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem.  
At tibi prima, puer, nullo munuscula cultu  
Errantes hederas passim cum baccare tellus  
Mixtaque ridenti colocasias fundet acantho.  
Ipsae lacte domum referent distenta capellae  
Ubera, nec magnos metuent armenta leones.  
Ipsa tibi blandos fundent cunabula flores.  
Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni  
Occidet; Assyrium vulgo nascetur amomum.  
At simul heroum laudes et facta parentis  
Iam legere et quae sit poteris cognoscere virtus:  
Molli paulatim flavescet campus arista,  
Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva,  
Et durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella.  
Pauca tamen suberunt priscae visticgia fraudis,

Quae tentare Thetim ratibus, quae cingere muris  
Oppida, quae iubeant telluri infindere sulcos.  
Alter erit tum Tiphys, et altera quae vehat Argo  
Delectos heroas; erunt etiam altera bella,  
Atque iterum ad Troiam magnus mittetur Achilles.  
Hinc, ubi iam firmata virum te fecerit aetas,  
Cedet et ipse mari vector, nec nautica pinus  
Matabit merces: omnis feret omnia tellus.  
Non rastros patietur humus, non vinea falcem;  
Robustus quoque iam tauris iuga solvet arator;  
Nec varios discet mentiri lana colores,  
Ipse sed in pratis aries iam suave rubenti  
Murice, iam croceo mutabit vellera luto;  
Sponte sua sandyx pascentes vestiet agnos.  
"Talia saecula," suis dixerunt, "currite," fusis  
Concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae.  
Aggredere o magnos — aderit iam tempus — honores,  
Cara deum subolee, magnum Iovis incrementum!  
Aspice convexo nutantem pondere mundum,  
Terrasque tractusque maris caelumque profundum,  
Aspice, venturo laetantur ut omnia saeclo!  
O mihi tam longae mane pars ultima vitae,  
Spiritus et, quantum sat erit tua dicere facta:  
Non me carminibus vincet nec Thracius Orpheus,  
Nec Linus, huic mater quamvis atque huic pater adsit,  
Orphei Calliopea, Lino formosus Apollo.  
Pan etiam, Arcadia mecum si iudice certet,  
Pan etiam Arcadia dicat se iudice victum.  
Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem:  
Matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses.  
Incipe, parve puer: ciu non risere parentes,  
Nec deus hunc mensa, dea nec dignata cubili est.



Publius Vergilius Maro



Muses of Sicily, inspire, help, breathe:  
Help us to reach a somewhat higher place, a better theme.  
And as for groves and all your pastoral shrubbery,  
Leave them.  
They are not for everyone.  
Yet, if we must frequent those forests, may they at least  
Be worthy of a consul.  
Now the time has come, the last age of the Cumaen prophecy.  
Now time's great cycle is born, anew.  
Again returns to earth a goddess, maiden, pure.  
Again returns to earth the reign of Saturn.  
Now brought down from lofty heaven, a newborn hope,  
A child, arrives.  
Look with love, Lucina, on this child.  
Look with love upon our newborn hope.  
Thus shall fall this iron age of war,  
And thus a golden time, Apollo's age, arise.  
It is with you, O Pollio, and with your consulship  
That our expectations for the coming months begin.  
Under your guidance, if any traces of our former shame persist,  
They shall be cleared and free the world at last  
From apprehension.  
This child shall live the life of heaven's grace on earth  
Amid a crowd of gods and heroes intermingled.  
Known by them and knowing, he shall rule a peace-made earth  
With all his father's skill.  
For you, O child, and for your infancy, the earth pours forth  
First gifts without reserve:  
Here wanders ivy with aromatic blossom  
And there lilies mingle with smiling acanthus.  
She-goats come to the fold ready to be milked  
While herds no longer fear the lions.  
For you, O child, even the cradle pours forth caressing flowers.  
The evil snake shall die and the treacherous plant of poison fall.  
And now, the soothing Assyrian balsam flower  
Shall everywhere arise.  
As soon as you are old enough to read and understand  
The noble deeds of heroes and your father,  
And when you come to know what moral greatness is,  
Then, by slow degrees, the fields shall grow gold with grain,  
The ruddy grape shall hang from careless thorns,  
And rugged oaks shall ooze their honeydew.  
Yet, some traces of your ancient shame will linger on,  
Tempting men to try the sea with ships,



Jealously to arm our towns with walls,  
 And in the earth carve furrows with the plough.  
 The monster of the myth shall come anew, and  
 Once again the Argo and its heros sail.  
 Look, here are other epic wars, another Troy,  
 Where great Achilles shall be sent to die again.  
 When at length robust age shall have made a man of you,  
 And when the acquisitive merchant shall relinquish the sea,  
 And when the sea-going pine no longer plies its trade  
 In distant harbors,  
 Then the whole earth shall yield everything ungrudgingly;  
 Earth shall no longer suffer the sharp iron of the hoe  
 Nor the vine the sickle's cutting edge.  
 Then, too, the rugged ploughman will unyoke his weary oxen,  
 And fleece shall not seek the deceptive colors of the dyer's hand.  
 And in the meadows the rainbow-colored ram shall improvise his coat  
 Now with the sweet deep purple of the murex shell,  
 And now with the golden yellow of the crocus flower.  
 And now, with absolute simplicity, indian red shall clothe the little lambs.  
 To their spindles, and with one accord,  
 The Fates, who weave our destinies have proclaimed:  
 'Let such times as these run on.'  
 Come, for the time is now,  
 Come, O child divine.  
 Achieve those mighty honors that are meant for you.  
 Look upon your world that totters with its curving weight.  
 Regard the land and vast expanses of the sea and sky.  
 Look at last, O child, at all creation,  
 Joyful in the time to be and  
 Joyful in the time at hand.  
 And as for me, I am a poet, Oh let me live to see it  
 With heart and breath enough to sing your deeds.  
 Then neither Linus nor Thracian Orpheus might conquer me with singing,  
 Even with the help of Calliope or radiant Apollo.  
 And even if Pan should contest with me in music  
 With all Arcadia as the judge,  
 Then even Pan would say he had been beaten by a better man.  
 Baby boy, begin, if only with a smile,  
 Begin to recognize your mother.  
 For you she waited out the confinement of her term.  
 So, smile at her.  
 For how, if you do not smile, will  
 A god honor you with his table or  
 A goddess with her bed.

Dr. Christopher Frost  
 translated by Lucy Edelmann  
 Karen Hills

# Through a Glass Brightly — Reflections on Germany

To the student of current events there is probably no nation on the face of the earth more fascinating than Germany. The communist threat, the anti-nuclear movement, a woeful economic slump, and racism are all present, and present with a vengeance. In addition, something about Germany, perhaps its location, or its limited land and water resources, or perhaps even its history and the moods of its people lends a sense of precariousness and immediacy during turmoil to which we in America are seldom exposed. The struggles of Germany are a microcosm of the trials of the entire Western world.

It is also arguable that Germany bears a closer resemblance to the United States than any other modern country. In most Americans there is a visceral feeling of affinity with Great Britain which stems from our shared language. This intuition is based more on feeling than on fact, however. In attitude and in situation, West Germans and Americans are remarkably close. Therefore, learning about Germany is not simply an exercise in abstract enlightenment to be indulged in by fanciers of international esoterica; it behooves each of us to understand the ways of Germany if we want to better comprehend our own position.

Germany has been accorded of late the attention that I have suggested it deserves, and there are many capable commentators examining every nuance of that country's behavior. To attempt to out-analyze these analysts would be presumptuous, if not downright boring. Rather, I hope to present a few brief glimpses of life in Germany as I perceived it. News reports and economic analyses can be unutterably dry. My observations lack the sophistication imparted by careful study, but it is my hope that they can give enough zest to the reader's conception of Germany to make the blander, but more substantial, fare palatable.

I travelled to West Germany last fall with my friend Jim Chesson. We went, not to analyze German society, but to test the old adage that the most valuable part of college is the time spent outside the classroom. (Our reasoning was that if this were true, greater benefits would ensue as we increased our distance from Tribble Hall. Hence, Germany.) Jim and I had to learn about Germany's culture and language as we went along, and we made many mistakes regarding both. My observations are thus more kaleidoscopic than telescopic in nature. It is sometimes difficult to determine the origin of the colors, and the effects created are often the result of an unsuspected reflection. The colors are pleasing though, and the patterns shift too quickly to make ontological doubts worthwhile. A particular pattern may not be "real", but every twist of the barrel presents a fresh perspective.

## The Greens

Both in name and in effect, one of the most colorful phenomena in Germany is the Green movement. This loosely knit coalition of people with a negative agenda (The Greens are anti-industry, anti-nuclear, anti-American, anti-government, and hardly pro-anything) afforded most West Germans quite a bit of amusement — that is, until they won the five percent of the popular vote necessary for representation in the Bundestag. The March election changed the status of the Greens from eccentric aberration to dangerous political threat. Notice has been served.

At a dinner party in Mannheim soon after the rise to power of the Christian Democrats (CDU), I created a minor sensation by suggesting that there was a danger of a coalition comprised of Greens and Social Democrats (SPD) unseating the ruling Christian Democrats and Free Democrats (FDP). I did not consider the remark all that perceptive, but some of the German guests obviously found it quite novel. The idea of Greens in government was simply not one seriously to be entertained.

In point of fact, the Greens have never entertained it very seriously themselves. They have cast themselves in the role of an opposition, and not necessarily a loyal one. Some Green Bundestag delegates have recently threatened to leak classified defense information which might become available to them. Such a potentially destabilizing and divisive force certainly presents interesting problems for the other members of NATO who must deal with the West Germans. Also, one must perforce look beyond the immediate threat to the Western alliance and consider what happened in Germany the last time a largely paralyzed government was in power. The wrench which the Greens hold poised over the works of the German government appears awfully large at times.

It is easy to paint too critical a picture of the Greens. They do come in varying tints, and the vast majority of those who style themselves Green are simply people who believe that there are things fundamentally wrong with the present direction of Germany and of the West. The position is virtually unimpeachable. My landlady in Germany assured me that not all the Greens had long hair and wore sandals. Some, she said, were quite respectable. The danger is that fundamentally respectable and right-thinking people may mar the edifice of German government without offering plans for selecting a new direction. The greenprint seems to be a plan of dismantlement; the corresponding and necessary blueprint is yet to be found.



## Blue Movies and Olive Drab

The Greens, and other Germans, claim to be neutralists in international sentiments. There are, however, distinctly anti-American overtones to these strains of "Germany first." Reasons for this sentiment are complex, but at least one cause is not hard to divine. There are thousands of American soldiers in West Germany, and sadly, albeit unsurprisingly, not all are well behaved.

A few weeks before my arrival in Mannheim, a crazed G.I. borrowed a tank from the motor pool of the base there and drove through the streets of the city (inflicting \$800,000 in property damage en route) until he was trapped on a bridge spanning the Neckar River, at which time he plunged over the side to death by drowning (tanks not being noted for their buoyancy). Thus, even before I arrived in Germany, I began to understand that being an American may carry some stigma.

The standard German impression of America and Americans is an interesting and internally inconsistent cluster of notions gleaned from "Dallas," McDonald's, our military presence and our cowboy chief of state. This state of knowledge is most laughable, since the knowledge of our culture possessed by the average German far outshines the reciprocal knowledge of his American counterpart, but combating the resultant unflattering stereotype was oftentimes as much amusing as it was exasperating.

Mannheim is an Army town, and most Germans outside academia whom I met there were mildly shocked that Americans were capable of courtesy and positively amazed that any of them would be interested in learning the German language and German customs. Army bases are designed to be little Americas, and it does not appear that the Army takes any great pains to encourage a mingling of cultures. There are official nods to catholicity, such as German-American days and American Forces Radio's "German Phrase of the Day," but substantial barriers between the American enlisted man and the Herr in the street still exist.

When the soldiers themselves hit the streets, they often have a pocketful of dollars, and the dollar has been quite valuable lately. Needless to say, there are German entrepreneurs willing to serve these wealthy young men far from home. On one of our first trips through Mannheim, Jim and I saw a huge marquee across which was emblazoned "Blue Movies." My immediate reaction was to be consoled that learning German was going to be easier than I had thought. My second thought was that many Germans probably did not appreciate what the American presence had done to their city. American cultural influences are ubiquitous in Germany. Unfortunately, our more mindless customs seem to be the ones that our soldiers import and that the German youth embrace as their own.

There are many Germans who hold the American military presence undesirable on grounds of principle. Others believe devoutly in the usefulness of our alliance, but find us to be boorish neighbors nevertheless. The ugly American who passes through on a twenty-day tour of Europe is an embarrassment, but a bearable one; the one who goes to stay is a matter of greater concern for all of us.

## Red Menace

Of course, our nation's finest would not be in Germany at all if it were not for Germany's monolithic neighbor next door. West Germany's relationship to the communist bloc is not simple at all. Soviet natural gas is virtually as important to German industry as are American markets. One quarter of what many Germans feel to be their homeland is sealed off behind the iron curtain. Finally, just to make matters interesting, guess who gets incinerated first if the superpowers have a nuclear exchange.

A bewildering variety of claims and counterclaims are made in the struggle between East and West. The Soviets tried to manipulate the March election. The Americans will sacrifice Germany to save their own hides if there is nuclear war. There is a way to cut through this unanalyzable tangle, though. Fifteen minutes from the bustle of downtown West Berlin, one can pass through Checkpoint Charlie to life on the other side of the Berlin Wall.

The first awakening shock comes on the train into East Berlin. Multilingual signs no longer include English, and the Cyrillic alphabet suddenly appears. Passport pictures are scrutinized carefully, and men carrying automatic weapons and leading attack dogs peer underneath the train at the stops. Moreover, there is an indefinable gloominess that hangs over the countryside.

The gloom is little dissipated in the city itself. There are few cars in the streets, the stores are practically empty, restaurant food is poor (although lines are long), and bombed-out ruins from the Second World War, neither razed nor restored, stand a mute indictment of life in the East. There is a grim sort of humor about the situation, however. Aeroflot is the official Soviet airline. I saw a travel poster displayed in the Aeroflot office in East Berlin, but in place of the usual seductive pictures of snow-capped peaks or scantily-clad bathing beauties was a shot of a red combine lumbering down a field of grain in Kazakhstan. I don't think I understand the worker's paradise.

Some Americans whom I met on the train out of Berlin told me of a conversation they had had with some East German students concerning the relative merit of the two systems. The East Germans contended that their system was quite equal to the Western one. When asked the rather inescapable question about the existence of the wall, they replied that they were free to travel anywhere in the Soviet Union they pleased and this freedom was more than they could ever use. They may have genuinely believed this answer, or may have given it only to avoid the risk of government informants. Either alternative is distressing.

A few West Germans cling tenaciously to the hope of a newly united Germany. The odds are against such an occurrence, but from the standpoint of humanity it is one greatly to be desired.

## In the Black?

East German communism has its troubles, but West German capitalism is not in much better shape. The Deutschmark has weakened, unemployment is up, and exports, the lifeblood of the German economy, have clotted in the world-





Ted Gentry

wide contraction. The biggest economic news during my time in Germany was the bankruptcy of the huge conglomerate AEG-Telefunken. German industries are not supposed to do that.

There is here a temptation to be alarmist. With the understanding that my words are musings and not predictions, I will succumb to it. Frankly, recent German history in times of economic turmoil is not encouraging. Nazism and Jew-baiting were the responses to the great depression.

Things are not as bad now as then, of course. Yet, the Germans have changed governments in search of an economic balm. (In itself, this move is hardly cause for alarm; other Western nations have done precisely the same thing. We and the Germans moved toward the right as countries such as Spain and France went left.) There does seem to be a rift in the society, which could be exacerbated by the wedge which the Greens might drive between either the CDU or the SPD and a majority in the Bundestag. In such an event, a strong leader might once again be able to appeal to the German people. The situation is not nearly so precarious now, but continued economic hardship could place quite a strain on the German social fabric.

As a sidelight, there is another parallel between the current hard times and those of a half century ago. There is a racial scapegoat. Turkish guest workers streamed to Germany in good times to fill the lowly jobs shunned by the affluent Germans. As more Germans have lost their jobs, however, these working Turks have come to be viewed as interlopers — and worse. A loathing of Turkish people is apparent on any streetcar when a Turk climbs aboard. One cannot help but wonder how this sentiment differs from that once held toward the Jew.

### Heidelberg Orange

Happily the natural beauties and man-made treasures of Germany offer more than ample opportunities to escape the morbid contemplation of economic and political woes. Indeed, the seductive beckoning of the castles and cathedrals is well-nigh irresistible. If there is a fitness in the affairs of the world, it would seem that no harm should befall Germany as long as men can be persuaded to stop and consider the awesome beauty of the Alps and the Black Forest and the fairy-tale pictures of Neuschwanstein and Schloss Linderhof. Such scenes of transcendent and idyllic charm must be by far the best antidote to human ruthlessness.

Heidelberg nestles in the shelter of the valley about the Neckar River. Of central importance is the castle, a magnificent structure of red sandstone which now serves part-time duty as a stage for theatrical and musical presentations. The castle may be most noted for the contents of its cellar, a 49,000 gallon wine cask which appears to be approximately equivalent in dimensions to a steam locomotive (though most would agree that the locomotion provided by the former could be considerably more entertaining than that of the latter).

The castle was damaged in French campaigns of 1689 and 1693, yet it has survived. Only three buildings in Heidelberg predate that period. One of these is the Hauszam Ritter

(roughly, House of the Knight). We dined there on a delicious repast of veal, vegetables, and wine. Then, it was back across the Neckar to secure a vantage point, for tonight was special.

Four times a year, the Heidelberg castle is illuminated. This show includes fireworks, flares along the river, and pinkish-orange flares placed to reflect from the castle. The effect is indescribable. The blinking lights on the ships in the river below and the exploding flashes in the heavens above wreathe this scene of fancy and provide a touch of magic. The power of the imagination is unbounded on such a night.

### Disneyland Pink

About five weeks into our language course in Mannheim, we rented a BMW and drove south through the Black Forest into the Bavarian Alps. The simple act of driving was pleasure enough for a gasoline-starved American like me. Further, I am convinced that that car knew when we crossed into Bavaria. It became even more nimble and peppy than before; it was home. It is probably lucky that the car did have a nodding familiarity with the roads, because its driver spent too much time gazing at the natural splendors flashing by to be too concerned with the mundane task of steering.

One of our first stops was Lindau, an island town on the eastern top of Lake Constance. Fall is the time for festivals, and our timing was good in Lindau. We had stumbled into a sort of band convention. Drum and bugle corps, arrayed in dress which looked to me to be of another period, wandered the streets giving more or less impromptu concerts. I was even fortunate during my obligatory visit to the town cathedral. The church organ at Lindau is magnificent, and as I stepped into the cathedral, the organist burst into Bach's "Tocatta and Fugue in D-minor." The thrill of happening on my favorite work of my favorite composer will not easily be forgotten. I drew a little closer to Germany in that moment.

We proceeded from Lindau to Neuschwanstein, one of the castles of Ludwig II of Bavaria and certainly the castle most visited by Americans. You see, a rather famous castle in America was modelled on Neuschwanstein — the castle in Disneyland. The sensation of *deja vu* is odd and the disappointment of not finding Mickey Mouse is acute. However, parking is less of a problem at Disneyland east.

As might be anticipated, though, my fondest memory of this trip came from the Autobahn. As we headed homeward, I began to get the feel of Autobahn driving. Soon I was winging along at 160 km/h (100 mph). Suddenly a white Porsche 944 appeared in my rearview mirror as it crested a hill a kilometer behind me. By the time I had completed my lane change it was at my bumper, lights flashing. By the time I had checked my speed and looked up again, the Porsche was disappearing from view. There are some things the Germans do better than anyone else.

### Cold Gray

This essay ends with a somber tone. Every thought of Germany is somehow colored by the events of the Nazi period. It is impossible to divine exactly why a fundamentally good people let themselves be party to the greatest atroc-



ity of modern times. The Germans themselves seem a bit confused by the question. Many German men who fought for "der Führer" have the pride that veterans everywhere have, yet they must temper theirs with the knowledge that their cause was unjust. An old soldier with whom I dined talked matter-of-factly about his days in the military, but both he and his American hearers carefully avoided mentioning the morality of that war. It was past. When a German man on a train from Mannheim to Geneva uttered the name Hitler, his wife gasped and slammed our compartment door closed. It is better not to let strangers overhear such talk.

Just north of Munich is the little town of Dachau, whose concentration camp stands as a mute testimony of man's inhumanity to man. I visited Dachau the morning after a night of revelry at Oktoberfest. The effect was chilling. (To call it a sobering experience would be to sacrifice an important point to a bad play on words.) I knew the stories of what had gone on there, but history only lived for me when my feet walked on the same stones that had seen misery forty

years before.

It is a disservice to Germany to dwell on the past, or to suggest that the Germans are bound, or even likely, to repeat such acts. It is not a disservice, however, to examine how these things came to be in the first place. We are neither better nor worse than the Germans who built the concentration camps or the ones who wish that the Turks would go away. They are an affectionate, vibrant, basically good people.

The German state is smaller than the United States, with stricter limits on resources, and somehow these facts seem to translate to tighter bounds on the disturbances that they might be able to tolerate. Much tension in America has been dissipated in the past because our country was practically without bounds. The frontier has closed, though, and we must learn to live with our internal contradictions and internecine strife. If we can learn something about our struggle from the Germans, we will owe them a great debt.

*by Ted Gentry*



K. Meuser





M. Raye Shemler

## Music of the Spheres

With feet blistered  
till the redness turned to blood.  
Tarry no longer,  
willowy limbs convey unspoken words.  
I sat there envious  
watching your feet play Chopin  
on the wooden floor.

Pirouette, oh Pierrot clown  
Let me follow you to that world  
where anguished souls  
find grace in their awkward bodies.  
Movement becomes a song  
sung to the heartbeat each body makes.  
Softly, slowly the beats converge.

Then I sat you on the shelf  
while you stared at me with melancholy eyes.  
I crawled inside you and held the shell  
ever so carefully so as not to disrupt  
the secret breath We breathe together.

*by Janet Lee Gupton*



Carle Anne Peters



Joel Straus





M. Raye Sheemaker



Brad Fagg

## Scar

I fingered the cicatrix  
obtrusive to the vain  
as a wart  
but more beautiful  
fine threads of tender epithelium  
woven into a capillary trampoline  
my mind jumped backwards  
softly onto that moment  
suspended a full-blown glob  
of pricked crimson shone  
reflecting the huge, high sun  
on its tiny, crystalline  
convex glass surface  
I blotted with an index  
brought to my tongue  
a candied finger  
and tasted myself.

*by Dennis Manning*

# On Poetry and Politics — Carolyn Forché

## talks about El Salvador and her work.

by Nell Anders

and Judith Hiott

Carolyn Forché's first book of poetry, *Gathering the Tribes*, won the Yale series of younger poets award. Her second book, *The Country Between Us*, won the Lamont prize for poetry, and her most recent work, *Flowers from the Volcano*, is a book of translations of poems by exiled Salvadoran poet Claribel Alegria.

At Wake Forest Forché spent a little more than an hour reading from *The Country Between Us*; many of these poems arose from her own experiences in El Salvador. Introducing some of these, she spoke about adolescence, being a greaser in working class Detroit, former best friends, and Anna, her Slovak grandmother. Interspersed with the poems about El Salvador were similar elaborations on how she came to know the country — at first through exiled voices, then being there — the Colonel's house where she saw a sack full of shriveled human ears; a prison where men were kept indefinitely, in cells where they could neither sit nor stand; finding a population so accustomed to war that hardly anyone, adult or child, has not witnessed violent death.

The poems speak for themselves. Like the elaborations, their vividness and clarity of vision engages listeners. They draw people into Forché's world and challenge them to act upon what they find there.

**Student:** How did you become involved in the situation in El Salvador?

**Forché:** It began with a work I undertook to translate: the poetry of a Salvadoran woman named Claribel Alegria. I went to Spain to live with her. When I returned, a relative from Salvador came to speak to me about the situation in Salvador which up to this point in time was not in a revolution. But there was severe repression there, and there were people being killed. There were two priests who had been killed, and some nuns were imprisoned and tortured. They asked me, as an American poet, to come to El Salvador, and they included in that idea that I would be a writer, not only of poetry, but of other forms as well. They wanted to educate me about the country because they said to me, "In three to five years, there is going to be a war that could be the beginning of your country's next Vietnam." They said, "Would you like to understand it from the beginning?" Of course, I

was a university student at the time of the Vietnam War, and I was morally against that war as I learned more about it, but I didn't really understand it and certainly not the process by which we came to be involved there. So I was interested, but I knew that it would not be easy, and I was hesitant. I think the critical question was, "Do you want to do something for the people of Central America?" I think because I was raised in a religious family and raised to be responsible for my fellow human beings, therefore I could not resist the opportunity when presented to me to do some work there — somehow to help. So I went, and I made many and extensive trips there. So it began with poetry!

**Student:** What role do you think politics plays in poetry or poetry in politics?

**Forché:** I don't see them as separate. You see, I define politics with a small "p," in a more general way. By politics with a small "p," I mean our social relations, our economic structure, essentially the organiza-



tion of our society. And for me, it is more a question of morality than of politics, but I use the word "political" in a very broad sense to include all human relations. I think of poetry as that which springs from the deepest obsessions in human beings, that which gives evidence of our lives. So I don't think you can step away from — you can't step outside of — your own society. In that sense, all poetry is stored in that society, that culture, or in a single human being. The first book I wrote was about backpacking in the mountains of the Northwest, and that is because that's what I did during those years. And in my second book I wrote about people I knew then and my experiences in Salvador, because that's what I did during those years. So then poetry for me is very reflective of the life I was leading.

**Student:** Have you been involved or traveled in other countries besides El Salvador?

**Forché:** In Europe I've been to Yugoslavia, Spain, France, England, and, in terms of human rights work, to Ireland. But my first trip to Latin America was to El Salvador.

**Student:** In your first book *Gathering the Tribes* you make several references to Eastern European places and customs. Do you have ancestors with European roots?

**Forché:** My grandmother was Slovak, and I grew up in a Slovak — Irish family in Detroit, and because my grandmother lived with us when we were young, we were exposed to Czechoslovakian culture.

**Student:** Feminism is defined in a number of ways these days. In what terms do you consider yourself a feminist?

**Forché:** I have never (mostly be-

cause time does not allow me) worked in an organized way actively as a feminist, but because I believe in social justice, because I believe in the cause of human liberation and justice, I couldn't possibly *not* be a feminist. The background of my life is that I'm a feminist: I'm a working woman; I do not believe that the sexes are unequal; I'm a feminist — I support the Equal Rights Amendment — it never occurred to me not to be. It never occurred to any intelligent woman of my generation to assume anything else if she were in touch with her position in the society. All of us are.

**Student:** Are there any particular poets who you feel have influenced you in your writing?

**Forché:** I've been influenced by many: Adrienne Rich, Galway Kinnell, Pablo Neruda; by women writers who are politically engaged: Denise Levertov, Margaret Atwood, Elizabeth Bishop, Kiser, Mary Dell Asher, if you are speaking of contemporaries. Some of them are well-known; some of them are friends.

**Student:** What poets have you worked with?

**Forché:** I worked with Margaret Atwood in Canada at the International Congress on the Writer of Human Rights. Denise Levertov and I correspond with one another. I'm now a colleague of Galway Kinnell at New York University.

**Student:** What other foreign language poetry interests you?

**Forché:** Well, I'm translating at the moment a poet in New York, Garcia Lorca, so I'm influenced by him and by his work. Also — Pablo Neruda, (Miguel?) Hernandez, and Antonio Machado (whom I've used as an epigraph in my

book *The Country Between Us*). I've been very influenced by the prose of Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

**Student:** Do you think American poetry right now as a whole is tending toward a political involvement?

**Forché:** I think that for a long time the situation has been much the reverse. American poets felt that somehow they could not write — that they could not include certain subjects in their poetry or certain dictions. I question that, because my life has necessitated that that was what I write about. I questioned the assumption in myself that it (political themes) wasn't legitimate for poetry. So I think that the move is very positive; because American poets will feel freer to broaden the areas of their concern, whereas in the past there were certain areas which were not thought appropriate. I don't see a great movement toward being overtly political. I don't think poets can do that; I think they can only allow themselves something that might be explicitly political to occur in the world to affect what they are writing. The movement is really one that looks outside to the world, rather than within one's self, for something to write about.

**Student:** Is there anything that you forbid yourself to write about?

**Forché:** When I first started writing about El Salvador, I thought, "You can't do this. This isn't appropriate. It's not going to lend itself very easily to the sort of tone and language that contemporary poetry requires." I no longer wish to eliminate any concerns from the province of my work.

**Student:** How did you get started writing poetry?

Forché: I was nine years old; we were snowed in on a day much like today — only much more snow. I was the oldest of seven children in a very crowded house. We were complaining to my mother of boredom. "What can we do?" I said, and she told me to write a poem. She took her college poetry textbook from the shelf and taught me a little bit about poetry. I had been writing little things anyway, mostly small stories, but this was a great discovery for me. From that day forward, I wrote.

Student: Do you ever write any fiction now?

Forché: I'm writing a prose memoir, which is a nonfiction account of my experience in Central America, and that's taking up most of my time. I may write fiction later.

Student: In several poems in *The Country Between Us*, you write vividly about prison experiences. Were you ever imprisoned during your time in El Salvador?

Forché: I was taken into a prison for thirty minutes. I was not a prisoner; I was a visitor to the prison. I have never been incarcerated, either in Latin America or here. Not even for an hour.

Student: Have you ever been afraid that you would be?

Forché: Unfortunately, yes. I taught in a prison in Alaska. So I spent a great deal of time behind bars teaching, but not as an inmate.

Student: How do you feel the situation in Salvador — the problem of United States involvement in Salvador — can be resolved?

Forché: Our policy has led to the present stalemate. I don't think the Reagan administration has any idea of the effects

of its policies on the Salvadoran people. There are sectors of the Congress who support negotiations. I think these sectors should be strengthened. I believe now as I believed in 1978 that it is morally wrong to provide military aid to the Salvadoran government, as it is constituted. That is to say, to the Salvadoran military. The reason for this is that the Salvadoran military is internally structured very much like the Mafia. They are corrupt; they are guilty of the mass slaughter of non-combatant civilians. Whatever you feel should replace them or whatever kind of government would be acceptable as an alternative, I believe it is wrong to provide those security forces with the wherewithal to kill more people — and to steal more American tax money for their own private retirements, which is what they do. So on many fronts I am opposed to aid to the Salvadoran military for its endeavors. As the U.S. persists in its policy, the situation becomes worse and worse. What you see now in the terms of the Salvadoran government is an appeal for much more extensive aid. It has become obvious that their policy has failed. No matter how much aid we send to El Salvador, we are going to have a worsening situation. The Salvadoran government cannot win the war no matter how much help we give them. So I still feel the same now as I did five years ago, and it has been a futile battle to try to convince the American government of the wisdom of an alternative course. Perhaps eventually intelligence will prevail — but I don't have any particular hopes about that being very imminent.

Student: Whom do you deal with in

the American government?

Forché: Mostly the Congress. Sometimes I talk to State Department officials, although that has become much more rare, as I find it a much greater waste of time. The Congress is essentially the only channel that Americans like myself have to affect opinion. The Congress is very important, and our influence on them is very important.

Student: Do you feel very small when you go in front of the American Congress and try to sway them?

Forché: I did in the beginning, but I've received a lot of help from congressional aides. Slowly I've begun to realize that that's not something I should worry about — that I should just work for the sake of working and don't worry about whether or not I succeed.

Student: In an article you wrote for the *American Poetry Review* you asserted that no aid from the United States has ever reached El Salvador intact. Is this still true in your opinion?

Forché: I was talking about American economic aid and government aid. I don't think any economic aid has ever really reached the poorest of the poor. I don't think it's ever going to, and I think that the reason for that is the way that it's systematically siphoned off to the top levels of government and later simple delays of administrative processes prevent it from reaching the people for whom it is intended.

Student: You spoke of your grandmother before. Were you close to her?

Forché: Very close to her. She lived with us when I was a little girl. She died in 1968. And you know, we are very strongly in-

## "SELECTIVE SERVICE"

by Carolyn Forché

We rise from the snow where we've  
lain on our backs and flown like children,  
from the imprint of perfect wings and cold gowns,  
and we stagger together wine-breathed into town  
where our people are building  
their armies again, short years after  
body bags, after burnings. There is a man  
I've come to love after thirty, and we have  
our rituals of coffee, of airports, regret.  
After love we smoke and sleep  
with magazines, two shot glasses  
and the black and white collapse of hours.  
In what time do we live that it is too late  
to have children? In what place  
that we consider the various ways to leave?  
There is no list long enough  
for a selective service card shriveling  
under a match, the prison that comes of it,  
a flag in the wind eaten from its pole  
and boys sent back in trash bags.  
We'll tell you. You were at that time  
learning fractions. We'll tell you  
about fractions. Half of us are dead or quiet  
or lost. Let them speak for themselves  
We lie down in the fields and leave behind  
the corpses of angels.



fluenced in childhood, and sometimes it's not by the person we spend the most time with. In my case my strong influence was Anna. She made an impression on me. So she might pop up in any of my work.

**Student:** When you sit down to write, do you have any pet peeves or weird things that you have to do to be able to write?

**Forché:** I need time, which I don't have. I used to only be able to write on a typewriter, but I've cured myself. I can now write in longhand. I drink coffee constantly and pace, and sometimes I stay up all night to write a poem. I don't have any requirements such as silence or privacy, although it's very difficult when someone reads what I'm doing over my shoulder.

**Student:** Do most of your poems come from real experiences, or do you ever make up anything?

**Forché:** With very, very few exceptions, one being the poem "For The Stranger," they are experiential; they are transformations of a memory or vary on experiences that I've had.

**Student:** Do you revise a lot?

**Forché:** I revise many times. The poem "Burning The Tomato Worms" was revised eighty times in a period of three years. This teaches me how to make something well; it's a process of applying what I learn about language and craft.

**Student:** How did you come to know Claribel Alegria?

**Forché:** When I went to San Diego to teach, my first teaching job — I befriended a woman named Maya who was Claribel's daughter. She wanted

me to read her mother's work, and I postponed doing this for a long time, because I thought she would not be good. When I finally agreed, Maya brought out a stack of translations and asked me what languages I read. I chose the original Spanish. Claribel is a well-known poet in Latin America, but no translation of her existed in English.

**Student:** Where is she now?

**Forché:** She's living now in Spain. She is a self-imposed exile. She had written a thinly-disguised account of the uprising which occurred in Salvador in the thirties. This was in the form of a novel. The names were changed, and the situations were changed, but people recognized themselves.

**Student:** How do you feel about translating someone else's work? Do you enjoy that?

**Forché:** Well, it's a great deal of work. It's much more than moving from one language to another.

**Student:** Do you find it more difficult than writing your own?

**Forché:** Nothing is more difficult than writing original poems, but it is very difficult. You have to understand that the rhythm and musicality of one language is very difficult to translate into another.

**Student:** Do you feel responsible toward the poet whom you're translating?

**Forché:** Yes, deeply responsible. You're deeply responsible to the poet, to the original language, to the readers, to your own language. When I first undertook the task, I think I was envisioning just sitting down with a dictionary and working through the translation, the way that I translated Latin in school. Then I real-

ized what translating meant, how difficult it was going to be. It took me a whole summer to get anywhere near able to write a translation.

**Student:** Do you start with the literal translation and then try to meet all the language requirements?

**Forché:** Yes, I translate literally first, then I work with it and try to make a poem out of it in English. Then I go back to the original to be sure I haven't changed it too much.

**Student:** Do you feel as if you could sit down and do it not having known Claribel Alegria?

**Forché:** Right now at this moment, I could probably work on my own on Claribel, but I'm not sure what it would take to translate someone else. I'm now translating a poet in New York, Federico Garcia Lorca, with the assistance of the Lorca family. Lorca is dead so it is impossible to work with him, a luxury that very few translators ever have. But I'm going to be working closely with a nephew of Garcia Lorca.

**Student:** Were you very influenced by being part of the Vietnam generation?

**Forché:** Everyone of my generation was influenced by Vietnam, one way or another. You just couldn't escape it. When we grew up, this was the most prominent fact of our lives. We were the generation of draft eligibility, our boyfriends, our brothers. You couldn't escape it; people were always thinking about it — it wasn't as if it was a war that was happening half a world away that didn't have too much to do with you. Maybe it didn't have too much to do with certain generations, certain age groups. It did affect the parents, who were very divided about the war.

But essentially it affected us. We grew up, and there was the war, and you came into your adulthood confronting that fact. We didn't have the luxury to think, "Well, what are we going to do with our lives?" ignoring the war. It was difficult to escape having a very strange feeling about it. I grew up in working-class Detroit. I knew many, many, who fought in Vietnam, and when they were wounded or killed, or when they came home with severe difficulties or discouraged or depressed, it became difficult not to form some opinion about it and examine it more thoroughly. So I was very influenced. I didn't understand it all that well; I was a little bit young to understand it, but I was influenced by it.

**Student:** Has it influenced your poetry very much?

**Forché:** I've never written about it — because I simply can't — just because something would make good material for poetry, you can't force it. It never occurred to me — a poem about Vietnam. I was never able to do it, so I didn't do it. Salvador, on the other hand, did comply in the form of seven poems.

**Student:** Do you follow any specific political ideology?

**Forché:** Yes. "Caminante, no hay camino. Se hace camino al andar," which is on the front of my *The Country Between Us*, and means, "Walker, there is no path. You make a path while you walk." That's my political ideology. It's commitment to social justice, to moral rightness, and to make choices along the way. Marxism to me means many things, not all of which are political ideologies. In this country it's very difficult to talk about Marxism without talking

about it filtered through the idea of what we think of the Soviet Union, and how we view the Soviet Union. I'm not a Marxist. But it's almost impossible for me to give you in very few words what the reasons are or what I think is the problem with that whole area of inquiry. I'm not even a member of the democratic party — in fact, I'm not a member of anything. I'm not even a member of Amnesty International, because my dues have run out. I'm very independent; I don't think I would even join a political party unless it was a major American political party.

**Student:** Do you think you'll ever join the Democratic Party?

**Forché:** I may join the Democratic Party, but I would never join anything else. I'm not interested in forcing reality to conform to theory. I'm interested in looking at the world as clearly as possible — seeing it as it is and acting according to moral imperatives.

**Student:** So you think organizations stifle individuals?

**Forché:** I think organizations are the only way that some people function. But I think that they tend to take on a life of their own and a will of their own. And I think that those which are based on a particular system of thought, doctrine, or ideology are particularly difficult. The individuals involved tend to filter their perceptions of the world through that system of belief, and they don't always see the world, for those reasons. Also, often in political organizations, the sensibility of the leadership tends to dominate. People lose their individual capacities to judge, to make up their own minds. And often what is believed serves the interests of keeping

the leadership in power. It's very difficult to challenge power, especially within an organization. I'm not saying that people can't function reasonably well within them; I think it's possible. Another thing is that I would like to function as a free witness, a free agent. I think that I can reach more Americans if I keep myself apart from promoting some particular political alliance, and if I instead am continually willing to describe what I see as it is rather than as an organization would like it to be.

**Student:** A lot of your poems depict characters who seem to be trapped in an organization or in the structure of their society. Characters like the guy in "Joseph." Is this right?

**Forché:** Joseph was trapped in a post-Vietnam War syndrome. Joseph didn't belong to an organization. Joseph was my next-door neighbor when I was little, and he was a very confused young man who didn't know exactly what to do with his life. He went to Vietnam because he saw it as his duty. I think Christianity was a very strong force in Joseph's life, and I think he was continually divided between "Thou shalt not kill" and "Go do your patriotic duty." Also in becoming a man, I think he encountered some difficulties with what manhood meant, and he moved to an area of the country where manhood is very much measured by whether you can kill — shoot a deer — or whether you can drive a four-wheel-drive over impossible terrain, and all that. I think that Joseph wanted at some point in his life very much to be a saint. So the poem is really about the contradictions that he felt, and the emptiness, and his life in the years following Vietnam



when he couldn't quite leave that experience, but he had very mixed feelings about it. So I'm the little next-door neighbor girl whom he never took very seriously because I was three years younger — but I loved him — and the poem's voice is that little girl all grown up saying, "What are you doing with your life? What about the things you cared about when you were a child? What's happened to your soul?"

**Student:** Joseph and Anna seem to appear a lot in both of your books. Do you feel they're still with you enough that they'll be in your future work?

**Forché:** I don't think Joseph will come up again. I loved him when I was little; I loved him for seventeen years of my life. But I think with that last poem "Joseph" we lost track of each other. We are out of contact, and it's one of those sad facts that we probably don't have anything to share in the future. Our lives have become very different, and I think in a sense I have put away that point of my life. Now Anna is something else. Because I am her granddaughter, because I am beginning to travel in Eastern Europe, and because I have inherited some per-

sonality characteristics from her, as I grow older, I understand her better, and she becomes more vivid to me rather than less so. She tends to stay with me whereas Joseph fades into the past as time goes on. Anna and I can never be farther apart than we were in 1968, which wasn't very far.

**Student:** What advice would you give to people who are writing poetry?

**Forché:** To read as much as possible. Not only from contemporary poetry, but also from the canons of literature — read Dante, Shakespeare, and so on to learn as much as possible about the traditions. Also, write every day, whether it's poems or journal notes or stories or passages — anything. And try to stay awake, and conscious, and to live life in an engaged way — fully, no matter what that means. Attempt to educate one's self as completely as possible. There's no other advice. Galway Kinnell used to say, "You have to have a good memory," so I would say cultivate a good memory. But there's very little one poet can say to another about how to proceed, except to have faith and work hard.

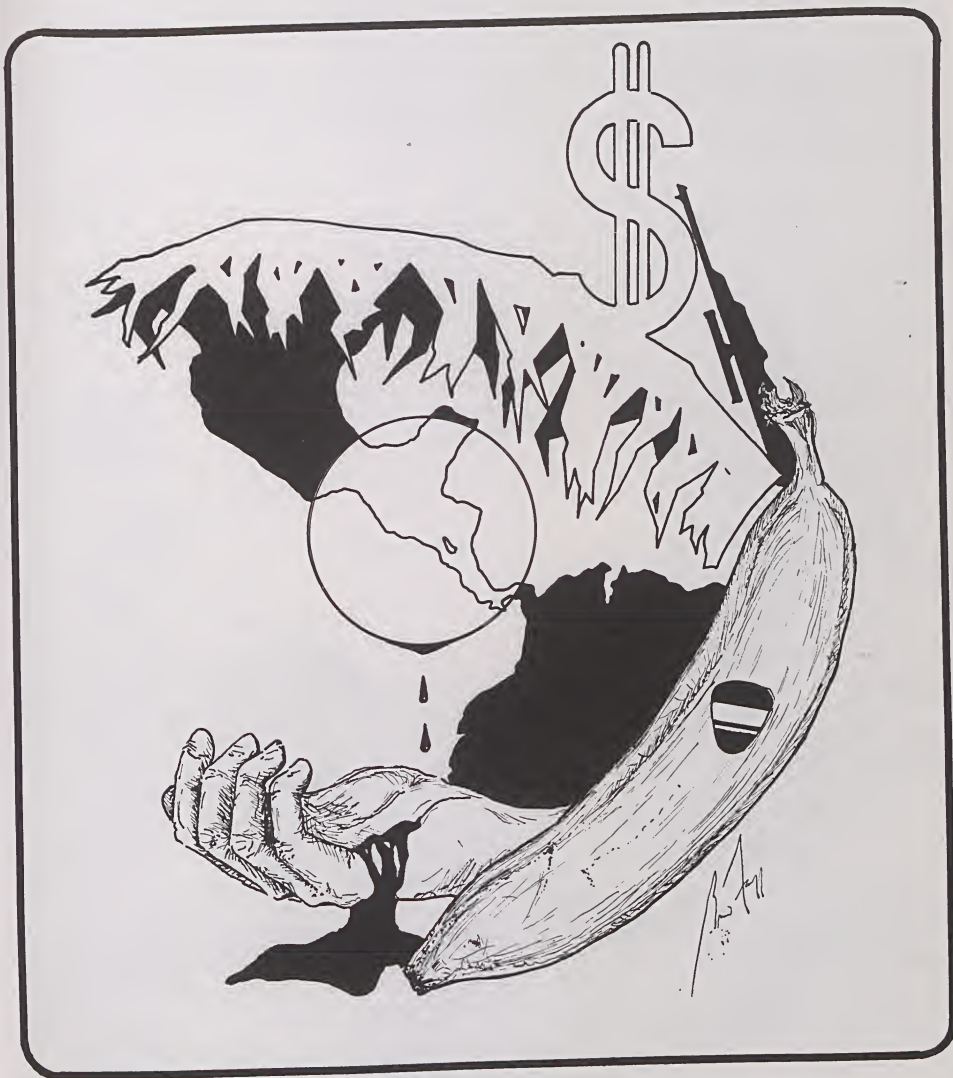
**Student:** Are there any favorite authors you would suggest?

**Forché:** Right now? I just read a marvelous novel called *Housekeeping* by Marita Robinson. It's lovely, so she has become one of my favorite writers at the moment. The poets and writers, of course, that I mentioned earlier. I'm also interested in a novelist who writes in German — I believe he's Austrian — named Peter Handke. He has written a lovely novella called *A Sorrow Beyond Dreams*; it is a beautiful account of his mother's death. Because of that work and a few others, he is one of my favorite writers. Any other questions?

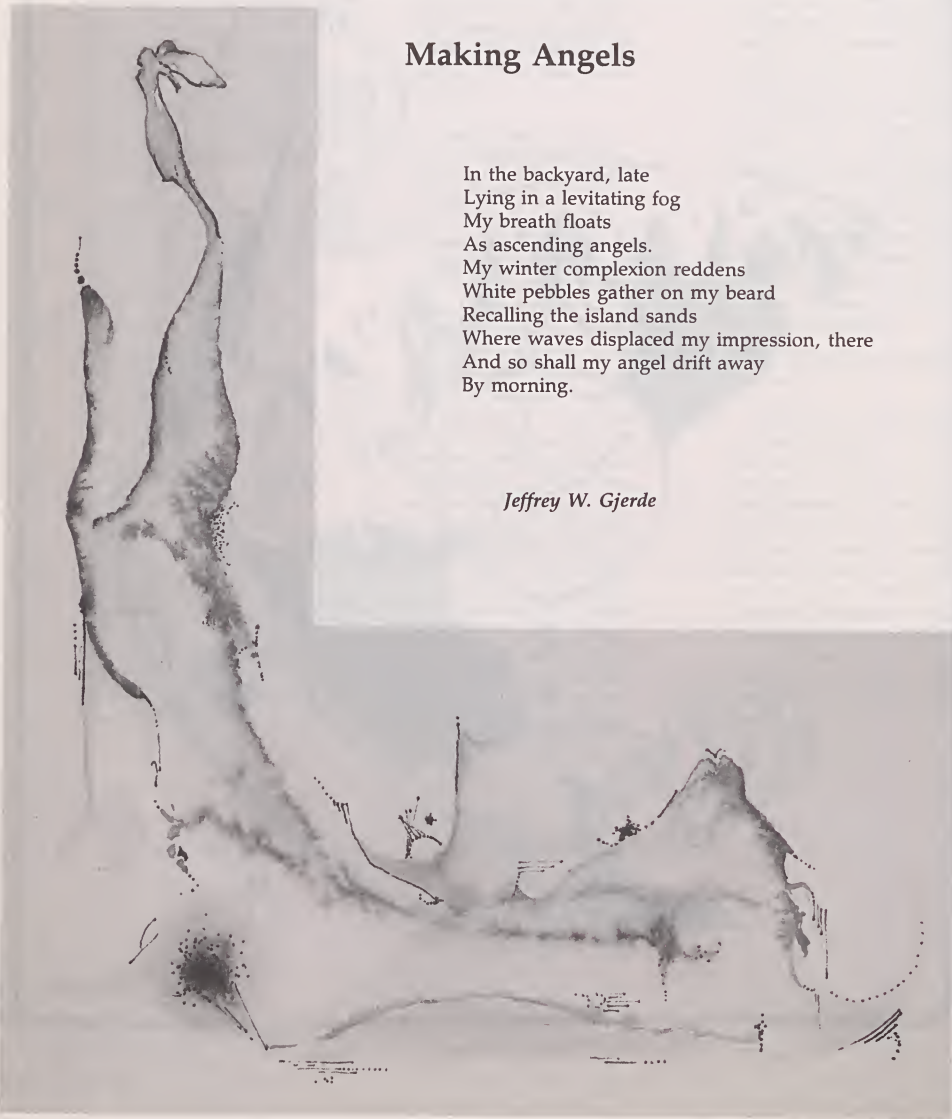
**Student:** Yes. Where'd you get that necklace?

**Forché:** In Mexico. I went to help my friend Margarita; her two teenage daughters were abducted in El Salvador by the Hacienda Police, and one of them, the seventeen-year-old, was tortured in prison, and our work was to try to free them. I also saw it as my duty (and what I desired to do) to go to the mother's side, so that I could be with her if the daughters were killed. She bought me this; that's where it came from.





Brad Fagg



## Making Angels

In the backyard, late  
Lying in a levitating fog  
My breath floats  
As ascending angels.  
My winter complexion reddens  
White pebbles gather on my beard  
Recalling the island sands  
Where waves displaced my impression, there  
And so shall my angel drift away  
By morning.

*Jeffrey W. Gjerde*



Early Street



TO A MIDWESTERN WOMAN,

THIRTY YEARS A SOUTHERN WIFE

Rooted in a land which nourished  
Infected leaves  
Your father, self-pruned,  
Transplanted in a western wilderness  
Broke new soil  
And rejected the morning sun.

Planted in a soil from which no  
Flowers stem  
Your husband is imprisoned  
In a wilderness  
Where roots, so matted  
Yield only honest  
Weeds.

You  
Rooted by desire  
To be planted  
Become ground cover —  
Contact deep roots  
Engulfing  
But never penetrating them.  
Finally decomposed  
You fertilize root hairs  
And daring them to call you a prostitute,  
Make humus for wildflowers.

*by Judith Hiott*



Elizabeth Hester  
1993

Elizabeth Hester

## Observations of England

I tried to sleep. I knew I needed to. But the time zone change from New York to London really threw my system off. It was off even worse the next morning. Sticky, hungry, and very thirsty, I made my way to what I thought was the bathroom. I was right, but a female voice stopped me from going in. So this is a Wake Forest program? Anyway, I finally got my shower. Breakfast consisted of tea and *The Times* (drink the tea, read *The Times*). I knew three of the other students who were in the kitchen. The rest — well, its going to be a long semester.

After establishing a bank account at the Barclay's around the corner, I went with my roommate for lunch at the George Washington pub which was around that same corner. A pint of bitters (a type of British ale) with our beef and kidney pie helped us to fit in with the regulars, almost. The first pint, 20 oz. that is, was so good, that we decided to try another. The novelty wore off as the buzz wore on. We were really beginning to fit in with the regulars now.

Pubs close at two in the afternoon, so we walked around our new neighborhood a bit. Everything was there — bank, supermarket, green-grocer, butcher, pub, laundromat — everything. As we had to do our own cooking, food shopping was next on our list of 'getting-settled-in' things to do. Because of the proximity of the stores to the Worrell house, we were able to get by with shopping on a daily basis. Of course, everybody ate (and drank) many meals at the nearby pubs, fish and chips shops, and doner kebab (gyro) shops. The criterion by which these fine eating establishments are apparently measured is the amount of grease the food can hold without the grease dripping off. Maxwell of Ealings fish-and-chip shop was the house favorite. Not only did it use a superior grade of grease, but it also had the most consistently greasy chips.

I seemed to be one of a very few who appreciated the kebab shop down the street. It seemed that the Turkish grease was too crude for the more sensitive palates in the house. There was a strong correlation between the people who didn't go for the culinary adventure route and those who opted for the Wendy's route. Just go to Wendy's, click your heels three times, and you're back in Kansas, or Winston-Salem, or wherever (but at least in America, thank you).

Despite the occasional homesickness (from which nobody could claim entire immunity) everyone of our group was here to see London, and Great Britain. The best way to see London, or any city, is of course by walking around in it.

While some people liked to plan their excursions, I preferred to wander aimlessly about. This method of getting to know a city has worked well for me. What I did was take the subway, or "tube" as it is known in London, to any stop in the city center, get off, and start walking. Though I did inevitably cover some of the same ground two or three or more times, I also stumbled into places I otherwise would not have thought of investigating.

For example: one of the first days I was in London I spent walking around what I later found out was the Soho area. Soho is generally a pretty seedy locale, but it does have some interesting nooks and crannies to be explored. The most interesting of these nooks, from the standpoint of an upper middle-class WASP youth, were the numerous sex shops. That these shops were "hidden" by bristling produce markets did not escape my liberal-arts nurtured sensibility.

As time passed, streets and buildings became familiar. I started to widen the scope of my initially limited wanderings. I developed a sense of neighborhood around our house. I soon thought of other parts of London as mine too. The lady behind the bar at "my" pub started to recognize me, as did the greengrocer and butcher. I no longer needed to think about how to get to the National Gallery. I didn't marvel at the accents as I had at first. In fact, after a few weeks, I realized that there are many types of British accents, just as there are different American ones. I was beginning to be able to identify where Britishers were born by the way they spoke. In short, the shine was starting to fade.

This loss of novelty was compensated for by an enriched appreciation of my whole situation, though. The process of enrichment through familiarity also affected the social dynamics of our group. Because of our common background, both as Americans and as Wake Forest students, identical class schedules, and common living quarters, we became very close. The communal living experience was perhaps as important as the immersion in this foreign culture.

Our class schedules were the most apparent element which we shared. In addition to two classes taught by the Wake Forest professor who came over with us, we took a class on the history of London and one on British art history which were taught by British professors. The British higher educational system is not based on the same format as ours. The British method, known as the tutorial method, goes something like this: the student meets with his/her "tutor" who "suggests" a book to be read for the following week; at the





David Haller

next weekly meeting the student reports to the professor on the past assignment in both written and oral form; a new assignment is given.

Without getting into the strengths and weaknesses of the tutorial system, I'll say only that it is designed to work on a one-to-one basis, not the sixteen-to-one basis we had. Class time with Professor Negley Harte was consequently often used for endeavors other than learning London history — letter writing and reading for other classes were the more popular pastimes. While we did have a 15-20 page paper to write, and a journal to be kept of brief essays and reflections on about 40-50 historically significant sites in London which we had to visit, these were due near the end of the term. I probably should add that procrastination was one of two hallmarks of our group.

Actual classroom activity with the art history class was a bit more familiar to us — we were lectured to. The final exam and 15-20 page paper for this class were also due at the end of the term. The major art-related activity for us was the weekly tours of art galleries on which we were taken. The tour guide was an art history professor, though not the one who gave our class slide-lectures. The gallery tours were in effect regular art history lectures with the difference that, instead of looking at slides of famous pieces of work, we were able to see the original about which the professor was talking.

This first hand experiencing of things we were learning about is, I think, the strength of the academic program in London. Actually touching a historical landmark about which I had read in a history book added a new dimension to my sometimes dry history readings. Conversely, seeing landmarks made exotic by their remote origins and anachronistic presence stimulated me to learn something more about them. This synergetic learning stimulus applied to all the courses I took in London. The wealth of galleries we visited stimulated and rewarded our art history studies. Interest in our other studies in dramaturgical history and contemporary dramatic literature was also stoked by our being in London, the theater-goers' mecca.

Because all our lengthy written work was due at term's end, the month and a half before spring break was a relatively carefree time. Most evenings were spent either at a theater, a movie, a concert, or a pub. Like any major international urban center, London offers an overwhelming array of cultural activities. Though theatergoing was probably the most popular cultural pastime of which we partook, concert-going was a close second.

The British music scene held a certain fascination for our group. Popular music permeates British society to a greater extent than in America, so we couldn't help avoiding it. What is called "New Wave" music in Winston-Salem is only



David Halley



the watered down tip of the British pop-music iceberg. Some of us were overwhelmed by the array of forward looking music we heard on the "Top 40" radio stations. Also new to us was the manner of identification with and allegiance to a musical genre as manifested by a peculiar dress style. An amazing diversity of music and dress styles is covered under the heading of 'popular'. The accepting attitude I encountered at many concerts stood in direct antithesis to the reactionary, at times insular, attitude so often encountered at Wake Forest, and in small town America in general. I was surprised to see mixtures of ostensibly antagonistic rockabilies, (nostalgic looking) punks, and new romantic types at a Teardrop Explodes concert, for example. Hair dyed the color of clothing typically limited in America to golf courses and certain southern universities was not deemed unusual, if somewhat passé.

The anonymity that this big city affords allows one to explore his/her personality without fear of social reprimand. Clothing and life-styles which would be condemned at Wake Forest as bizarre and affected quickly lost their threatening nature for us. So some of us began to do and wear things beyond the pale of what would be normally accepted at school, here. One girl got a tight, sleeveless, leopard-spotted green T-shirt; a few guys took to wearing "pixie boots"; I permed my hair and got a pair of striped purple pants which are still one of my favorites.

After realizing that despite such "anti-social" behavior, the sky had not fallen and that I hadn't been laughed off the street (as I had secretly paranoically feared), I became more self-confident. This process of becoming what I once would have ridiculed instilled in me a tolerance for those whom I earlier would have condemned. But wait, this is sounding too much like an apologia for a liberal arts education.

Perhaps the biggest worry during this pre-spring break time was deciding where to travel during the three day weekends we had. The three day constraint limited us to travel within Britain. We did the (mythical) "student variation on the tourist theme." You probably know it. Overnight train rides because hotels are too expensive were not uncommon. Bed 'n' Breakfast at \$10-12 a night were the norm (don't forget that we were mostly upper-middle-class students, so financial concerns weren't too pressing). People who were really into the destitute-student thing stayed at rock-bottom priced youth hostels, but more out of choice than necessity.

We were similarly influenced by the "student in Europe" myth for our travel meals. If we stayed at a Bed 'n' Breakfast, the proverbial British breakfast greeted us in the morning. Otherwise, tea and a roll sufficed for our morning meal. Bread, cheese, and fruit were the order of the day. Plenty of bitters lubricated our passage through this foreign land. Sandwiches and meatpies at pubs made good, inexpensive dinners, as did fish and chips or kebabs.

We prepared similar things at home, which is what the Worrell house soon became. Quickly cooked things were popular — beans, mashed potatoes, sausages ("bangers" in local parlance), spaghetti, frozen meatpies, soups, salads, etc. The common elements in our meals were ease of prep-

aration and low cost. If somebody was low on cash or didn't want to run out to buy something, he/she assumed the role of "The Moocher" and liberated some unsuspecting person's food from their shelf. Mooching was the second hallmark of our group. Moochers and Procrastinators we were.

And so it went until spring break. With a minimum amount of study (compared with the after-break period) and a maximum amount of "getting into the culture" (watching plays, drinking exotic drinks, going to concerts, travelling to obscure places...), the first month and a half was a time whose bliss we would fully appreciate only in relation to the suffocating load of schoolwork we bore during the month and a half after the break.

By the time spring break was upon us, we were ready to get out of the house for a while and do some long term traveling. Most people validated their Eurail passes and "did" the Continent in a week and a half. A small few stayed in Great Britain to explore it more extensively than our three day weekends would permit. And I, well, I went to Ireland. After all, St. Patrick's day was during our break.

I was the only one of our group not traveling by train — I hitchhiked. I am convinced that, short of walking, hitching is one of the better ways for a student to travel in Britain. Britain is the traditional hitchhiker's paradise. The longest I ever waited in Britain for a lift was about sixty minutes. A wide variety of people gave me a ride: a psycho-analyst, some truck ("lorry" in G.B.) drivers, some well-to-do business men, a philosophy professor, an insurance salesman, a soldier, and some construction workers, among others. I don't think I could have met a broader cross section of British society any other way. Besides, the price was hard to beat!

Traveling by myself proved to be enlightening, too. The sense of freedom was exhilarating. Not being encumbered by anyone else's hangups nor encumbering anyone else with mine, I could go wherever and do whatever I liked. The first couple of days were fine, but after that I did become lonely. Friendships are not easy to make when it's here today, gone tomorrow. It was about a week before the internal dialog that took the place of ones I missed having with my friends became less persistent. The songs I sang to myself became more and more fragmented, chant-like. My head was clearing. Unfortunately, just as I was getting reacquainted with myself, it was time to return to Worrell house. In the meantime, I had learned something about myself, Ireland, St. Patrick's day, and Guinness Stout.

The reunion at the house the day before classes resumed was a jubilant one. Everyone was anxious to tell the others about their adventures. The first week or so after our return we spent trying to come to grips with the fact that our holiday was over and that we had much work yet to do. When I go through the journal I kept during this time, I'm struck by the number of references I made to the approaching onslaught of work.

An excerpt from a letter I wrote a week after the term sums things up pretty accurately:

Now I find myself with a few minutes in which to breathe freely. I'm in a train station in Coventry waiting for a train to Salisbury, pint in hand,



and... nobody breathing down my neck. The last month of school was an ordeal from which I am only now beginning to fully recover. The first week after Spring Break was carefree enough. The dreadful reality of major papers looming ever larger on an increasingly gloomy horizon began striking chords of mortal fear into the depths of our very souls! (How's that?)

Between 15 April and 3 May, I had to begin preparing for and complete: two 15-20 page papers, three 10 page papers, one 5 page paper, two 2-3 page papers and an art final. The two 15-20 page papers, one for history of London and the other for art history, were both due on the 22nd. All of the larger papers determined a major (30-50%) portion of the grade for their appropriate class.

I ended up pulling one all nighter (in addition to pints, one always "pulls" all nighters) before the history of London paper and art paper were due. Started *writing* the history paper at 9:00 p.m. on the 21st and finished recopying it at 9:00 a.m. on the 22nd, one-half hour before it was to be turned in. History class was hilarious because everyone was severely sleep deprived as a result of researching and writing put off until the last possible minute. Some people had gone two or three days without sleep. Zombie city. Then, at noon, when class had adjourned, I had to start recopying my art paper. I was lucky. Some people had just started writing their first (and last) draft. Of course, I had a nice pub lunch to fortify myself with before my task. I finished just before

the art professor left the house. I was in a shambles induced by a combination of no sleep and excessive writing, coffee, and cigarettes. We all released our tensions that evening at the local, though it was an evening cut short by unusually early bedtimes.

But the fun was not over. The rest of the paper writing and art final cramming were nerve wracking; but, by then we were either so hardened or stunned, I'm not sure which, by the round one that round two was not as gruesome. Still, it was a gut-wrenching fight to the bloody end. Unfortunately, but not unexpectedly, I did not see so many plays during this period of mental abuse. I have seen quite a few plays during the semester though...

For a multitude of reasons, my semester in London left a strong impression on me. Many of these impressions, I'm sure, are peculiar neither to me nor the group with which I stayed — they are impressions which most likely strike all WFU students spending a semester at the Worrell house. I wonder how many Worrell house alumni would tell a story similar to mine. The strength of this program is the consistency with which it enlightens all participants. On one hand it provides a most rewarding opportunity to live and learn with other students in a manner sorely lacking at the Winston-Salem campus. On another level it provides the priceless experience of living in and learning about a foreign culture as a student among fellow students. Though I want desperately to return to London, I know it will not be nearly the same. Unlike Dorothy, unfortunately, you can never go back to Kansas.

*by Bill Davis*



David Hadley

## **Pig Spill on I-26**

**They were full and porcelain pink,  
then they fell apart like dropped china;  
those huge pigs spun themselves  
as leaking barrels would  
spraying scarlet rooster tails.  
They enjoyed a real death —  
playground squeals told me so! —  
so did the way  
they wound their bodies  
like spools  
gathering the tickertape  
of white highway lines  
for their shrouds.**

**by Dennis Manning**



Deborah Ellis





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## THE COMPASS ROSE

By Ursula K. LeGuin

373 pp. New York:

Harper and Row \$14.95

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The stories in *The Compass Rose* explore the fertile imagination that has supplied the material for Ursula LeGuin's many science fiction and fantasy novels, children's books, and poetry. Taking off in various bizarre directions, the stories are loosely categorized in six "directions": Nadir, North, East, Zenith, West, and South. As LeGuin explains in the preface,

By calling this book *The Compass Rose* I hoped to suggest that some pattern or coherence may be perceived in it, while indicating that the stories it contains tend to go off each in its own direction. They take place all over the map, including the margins. It is not even clear to me what the map is a map of. A mind, no doubt; presumably the author's. But I expect there is more to it than that. . . . This is the compass in four dimensions, spatial and temporal, material and spiritual, the Rose of the New World.

As for the reasons why a particular story is assigned to a particular direction, they are not very serious. Nadir may be down underground, for instance, or in the depths, or simply downhearted. . . . Surely one of the means of learning to know the world as alive with symbol and meaning is to cultivate the art of taking things literally?

The "map" includes some countries that may be on Earth, some planets that are light-years from Earth, and some regions that can be reached only through another person's mind. The stories range from fantasy to science fiction to realistic tales of personal growth. The points of view include those of a girl who mistakes a unicorn for a white donkey, the silly captain of an insane crew in interstellar space (one

wonders how they made it that far; they are menaced by an Alien that begins to hiccup upon being fed tomato rice soup), and the wife of a lion who turns out, in a horrifying scene, to be a were-man.

In several stories ("The Wife's Tale," "The Eye Altering," "The Author of the Acacia Seeds," and "Mazes") LeGuin either treats the reader to a startling new point of view or shows how necessary it sometimes becomes to take a new look at things. For example, "Mazes" is a first-person account by a creature caught in a maze. The creature is highly intelligent and tries desperately to communicate with its captor via the complex, beautiful ritual dances of its culture. Its communicatory overtures are not understood in the least by the huge captor. Gradually the reader realizes that the creature in the maze is a rat and the captor is human. This story and "The Author of the Acacia Seeds" (which discusses manuscripts found in an Ant hill, penguin literature, and the possibility of understanding the poetry of plants and rocks) are particularly intriguing in pointing out the possibilities for communication and art which humankind has never seriously considered.

One device that LeGuin uses effectively in "Acacia Seeds" and again in "Some Approaches to the Problem of the Shortage of Time" is a well-chosen journalistic style. "Acacia Seeds" is written just like a set of articles in a scientific journal devoted to exploration of the various animal literatures. "Some Approaches to the Problem of the Shortage of Time" is a fantastically funny, tongue-in-cheek report that one wouldn't be surprised to hear on a radio news show:

Groat mentioned the "time stretcher" marketed by General Substances under the trademark Sudokron, withdrawn last year after tests indicated that moderate doses caused laboratory mice to turn into Kleenex. Informed that the Rand Corporation was devoting massive funding to research into a substitute for time, he said, "I wish them luck. But they may have to work longer hours at it!" The British scientist was referring to the fact that the United States has shortened the hour by ten minutes while retaining twenty-four per day, while the EEC countries, foreseeing increasing shortages, have cho-

sen to keep sixty minutes to the hour but allow only twenty hours to the "devalued" European day.

There are some stories ("The New Atlantis," "SQ," "The Diary of the Rose," "The Phoenix") which take place in and are controlled by cultures that would never read dolphin verse and could hardly be bothered to read human verse. In these stories, people lead not very happy existences in highly regulated, frighteningly decayed societies and institutions. "SQ," for example, is a monologue by the fanatically loyal, naive secretary of Dr. Speakie, who develops a test for a "sanity quotient" and "treatment" for those who don't satisfy guidelines. Eventually this includes most of the world — and Dr. Speakie. These stories are unnerving; the reader realizes that this sort of world is just as likely as the "Acacia Seed" world to be ours someday...perhaps even more likely.

There are, of course, many other types of stories, and there are stories that really don't fit into any "type." They can confuse the reader, too, if he does not take frequent breaks between stories to think through the world he has just read about and reorient himself to this one. Each of the twenty stories could take place on another world or, in some cases, even in another galaxy. The great hodgepodge of locations and moods is intriguing in its diversity; each one *does* "go off each in its own direction." As LeGuin warns in the preface, "As a guide to sailors this book is not to be trusted. Perhaps it is too sensitive to local magnetic fields."

by Alayna Keller

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## BLUE HIGHWAYS – A JOURNEY INTO AMERICA

By William Least Heat Moon

421 pp. Boston/Toronto

Little, Brown and Company \$17.50

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If anyone has ever had the desire to drop all responsibilities, get in a car and drive into the horizon, than *Blue Highways – A Journey Into America* will certainly be enjoyable. This is a true story, as experienced and written by William Least Heat Moon, the son of an American Indian. His goal was to drive, not across, but around the United States, a distance "equivalent to half the circumference of the earth." This is not your typical tourist guide road trip. In fact, Least Heat Moon made it a point to avoid all major cities, concentrating instead on the back roads of America. He also had nothing to do with "plastic roof franchises," those eating establishments which have lumped so much of America's culinary tastes behind a pair of golden arches. Least Heat Moon went on a journey to find the America

which is too often overlooked in the bustle of urbanization. Not only does William Least Heat Moon have a genuine interest in history and tradition, he has a natural rapport with people. Those are the reasons for the success of his trip. Without such patience and generosity, he would never have found that "lost" America, and the public would never have been able to enjoy this book.

Least Heat Moon journeyed alone, yet he was by no means a loner. He was always in search of good food and good conversation, two luxuries which often go hand-in-hand. He has a natural, appealing personality, which enables him to elicit a response from even the most reserved of people. One such incident occurred in Nameless, Tennessee, "a town of maybe ninety people, if you pushed it, a dozen houses along the road, a couple of barns, same number of churches, a general merchandise store... and a community center with a lighted volleyball court" (p.31). The author's mission was to find out how that town got its name. Upon inquiring at the general merchandise store, Least Heat Moon sensed the proprietors' reluctance to talk to a stranger. Yet within a few minutes, they gave the following account:

I stepped in and they both began telling the story, adding a detail here, the other correcting a fact there, both smiling at the foolishness of it all. It seems the hilltop settlement went for years without a name. Then one day the Post Office Department told the people if they wanted mail up on the mountain they would have to give the place a name you could properly address a letter to. The community met; there were only a handful, but they commenced debating. Some wanted patriotic names, some names from nature, one man recommended in all seriousness his own name. They couldn't agree, and they ran out of names to argue about. Finally, a fellow tired of the talk; he didn't like the mail he received anyway. "Forget the darn Post Office," he said. "This here's a nameless place if I ever seen one, so leave it be." And that's just what they did (p. 32).

Throughout the book, it is evident that Least Heat Moon never monopolizes a conversation. Being neither a crusader nor a spy, he is a man who genuinely enjoys hearing what others have to say, always maintaining an open rather than a critical mind.

For the most part, Least Heat Moon writes in a light, free, often humorous style. While he is not a ponderous author, there is a distinct connection between his moods and the moods of the landscape. Although there were many "up" moments throughout this trip, he took on a more sombre tone while traveling over the vast stretches of the West.

The country gave up the glacial hills and flattened to perfection. The road went on, on, on. Straight and straight. Ahead and behind, it ran through me like an arrow. North Dakota up here was a curveless place; not just roads but land, people too, and the flight of birds. Things were angular; fenceposts against the sky, the line of a



jaw, the ways of mind, the lay of crops.

The highway, oh, the highway. No place, in theory, is boring of itself. Boredom lies only with the traveler's limited perception and his failure to explore deeply enough. After a while, I found my perception limited. The Great Plains, showing so many miles in an immodest exposure of itself, wearied in my eyes; the openness was overdrawn. The only mitigation came from potholes ice sheets had gouged out. . . . Whenever the drone of tread against pavement began to overcome me, I'd stop and shake the drowsiness among the birds (p. 273).

This passage proves that Least Heat Moon is an honest author. Instead of blemishing or omitting any facts, the author freely admits that certain parts of his journey were considerably less than exciting. This observation proves to be an asset rather than an obstacle, for he is able to capture the monotony of the highway and relate it in an interesting way.

Not only is Least Heat Moon a good author, he has proven himself to be a fine photographer as well. *Blue Highways* is speckled with photos of the people he met on his journey. All of these pictures are in black and white making the story even more believable, more realistic. The reader will find himself staring at these photographs, noticing every detail, associating the author's words with the faces. Least Heat Moon has chosen his illustrations well, for each subject clearly reflects a particular region of the United States, making one realize how diverse this country actually is.

*Blue Highways - A Journey Into America* is not a fictional novel, not an autobiography, not a tour guide. It is what the title suggests, one man's "journey into America," consisting of his experiences and his observations. When Least Heat Moon writes, one can feel the momentum of the author's van taking in the many miles. The reader feels as if he too has seen Nameless, Tennessee, Dime Box, Texas, Frenchman, Nevada, and met some of their inhabitants. And in finishing his journey around the jagged periphery of the United States, one realizes that William Least Heat Moon has achieved a greater understanding of himself and this country. His account is certainly worth reading.

by Pandora Passin

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## THE GLAD RIVER

By Will D. Campbell

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*The Glad River* is the second novel by Will Campbell, a Baptist minister and a Wake Forest alumnus. As in his first novel *Brother To A Dragonfly*, Campbell has extracted from

his southern heritage a moving story whose effect depends on achieving a credible characterization. His characters become valid for us because of their simple honesty in the complex social environment of the Deep South. Both books are often humorous and always touching; however, it is unfair to rank either novel as better than the other. Each is valid in its own context. *The Glad River* is enjoyable and often funny, but its purpose is to present a religious doctrine.

"You said God is sludge. Tell us what that means."

"Well, I just got to thinking about what this stuff does — you know. I mean you said it makes things grow like nothing else in the world. But the truth is it's really what nobody else wants. I mean it's what everybody throws away, wants to get rid of, think they don't need — you know. And . . . aw, this sounds silly." He became awkward again, pushing the ground about with the toe of his shoe.

"No it isn't. Now go on," Doops said.

"Well, I was just thinking about when the baby Jesus was born in Bethlehem. You know, they wouldn't have him. Wouldn't even let him be born except in a barn. And then when they killed him — you know — how they buried him under these big ole rocks. Just threw him away, you might say." Kingston sat in rapt attention now, approving with his eyes what he was hearing. "But there was some kind of power there. Something just made him grow up out of there. And then that gives us . . . what do you call it? . . . salvation? And — you know — makes us grow and even when we're dead we grow again. I was just thinking about all that . . . and that's why I just said what I said, that God is sludge. You know, makes life and all."

"God is sludge," becomes the phrase which defines the religious beliefs of three social misfits who are the concern of the novel.

Doops Momber is the dominant character in the novel. His is a southern Baptist who will not be baptized because he claims that there are no proper Baptists to perform the ceremony. According to Doops a religious person is one who lives a life which for himself is good and which allows him to help others. Moreover, a religious person is willing to die to preserve the convictions which allow him to live this life. Doops knows no Baptists comparable to the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century who lost their lives because of their religious convictions and about whom he writes a story.

Forache "Model T" Arceneau is a Cajun who speaks only Cajun French. His involvement in the "neighborhood" begins with his friends who help him overcome the language barrier. He becomes important as the character closest to the natural environment of the South. Model T's family lives on a boat in the Mississippi River, and his occupation is to trap muskrats and nutria. He seals his friendship with Doops



and Kingston by showing them the place where he feels a communion with nature and in touch with his religion:

They saw it then. A perfect circle, about fifty feet in diameter, sloping affably into the earth, forming a pool. The water level was forty feet or so below the surface of the ground where they stood. The slough flowed to the edge of the circle and fell free. As the falling water hit the pool surface, it did not disturb it, did not splash, just seemed to fuse into and join it, becoming one with it. Floating gently around, slowly turning this way and that, were hundreds of water lilies. They were not the blue hyacinths generally found in swamp ponds and lakes. They were lilies. The colors varied — goldmist, celeste blue, mikado red. The gemlike green leaves formed a cozy nest for each blossom. Huge cypress trees stood at regular intervals around the circumference of the pool, their branches reaching and touching as a peak in the center, looking like an enormous summer parasol, boldly proclaiming mercy and defense. In the sharpest contrast, delicate ferns lined the sloping inside banks from the water's edge to the top, the fronds waving unassertively in the downward draft. Directly across from where the water fell into the pool, presiding over it all, stood a human-sized cypress knee. Except for the oxblood bark, it looked like a carved wooden statue. There was no mistaking what it was. Standing straight and majestic. Sure and utter and complete. Untouched. A perfect Madonna.

Model T loses half his face in the war, and he refuses plastic surgery, an act which can be interpreted as his refusal to conceal his blemishes from anyone. Ironically, his physical appearance alienates him from society and eventually causes his death.

Kingston Smylie is a New Orleans Redbone whose grandfather took Kingston and his mother into his home after his son had made the woman pregnant and then left her. Everybody thought Kingston's grandfather was his father. Kingston is the stabilizing force in the three-man "community": he teaches English to Model T, and he reminds Doops, when he forgets, that wisdom more often comes from experiencing life than from books.

These three characters meet as recruits in a World War II army camp, and by helping each other through difficult times build a friendship which they call the "neighborhood". The friendship survives the war and continues in their weekend gatherings after the war. All three bear witness to each other's religious beliefs, and this enables the community to survive the toughest test: the conviction of Model T as a brutal murderer. And the "neighborhood" triumphs.

Through these characters Will Campbell is able to show that every religion is valid if it does not hurt anyone and allows people to gather and worship God. The community of Doops, Kingston, and Model T is only one of these religious gatherings, and the greatest community of all would be a world community in which all people share their religious ideas and help each other grow.

Will Campbell has given us far more than an entertaining novel; Doops, Kingston, and Model T show us what it is to be southern, human, and religious.

*By Judith H. Hiott*

